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Cover: no earthly rhizome – enclosed in a flower globe, this bearded beauty is a 'Benton Menace', bred in the postwar period by the artist Sir Cedric Morris. To ensure your iris eyes are smiling, turn to page 130. Photograph: Tim Walker

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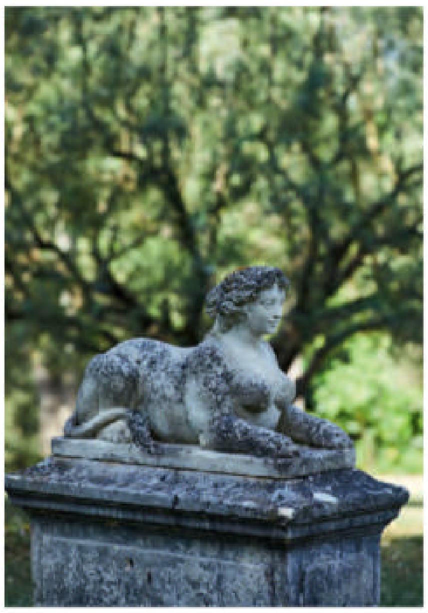

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Contributors

Amy Fine Collins

'A well-dressed person in a well-appointed home is a beau ideal.' And as an honouree of the International Best-Dressed List, Amy's well placed to speak. The *WoI* contributing editor credits Geoffrey Beene with 'rescuing me from academia, and pointing me in the direction of glossy magazine journalism'. For this glossy issue, she tiptoes through La Colle Noire, Christian Dior's 'talismanic' château (page 84).

Maciek Pożoga

Since 'quitting the comfort of the commercial world', Maciek has often found himself drawn to the political side of photography, a medium that he says largely involves 'looking for harmony in chaos, and creating life through chaos when things seem too harmonious'. Weaving elegance and eclecticism, he animates the work of the campaigning Senegalese/French textile artist Aïssa Dione (page 100).

Kim Jones

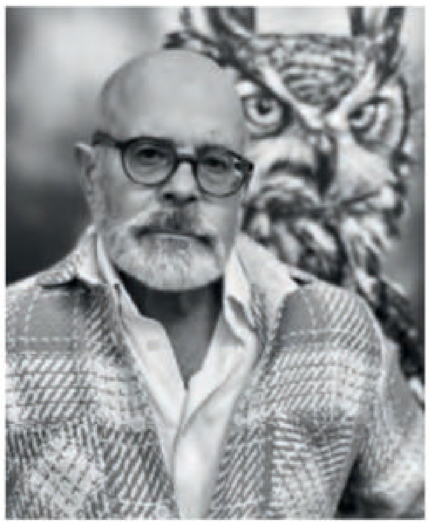
The artistic director of Fendi and Dior Homme grew up 'in an environment that got me to open my eyes to the beauty of collecting'; he's been doing so in earnest ever since he was at Central Saint Martins. That habit affords him 'a more tactile relationship to pieces that, previously, I'd only seen in photographs'. He's well suited, then, to give an Object Lesson on a Lucian Freud work (page 176).

Rebecca Swirsky

On the advice of Sir Andrew Motion, Rebecca has always resolved to 'write prose that looks like water but tastes like gin'. The author and critic has certainly distilled some potent pieces – including, for us, a preview of an exhibition of work by the Impressionist artist Berthe Morisot (page 76). 'She was a sensual painter, and quite differently so to her better-known male counterparts.'

Ricardo Labougle

Since he was a boy Ricardo has 'instinctively observed the world – literally everything – through my camera first… I think I was born a photographer,' he muses. He's been with *WoI* from the days of Min Hogg's editorship and says he still feels the same excitement on every shoot as he did then. This issue finds him at La Colle Noire, where he singles out the garden sphinxes as visual pièces de résistance (page 84).



William Norwich

'Mr Norwich,' said Diana Vreeland, 'reemeembuh everyone is going to tell you a story, but you must listen for the story inside the story.' Carrying forth this sibyllic counsel – conveyed in a 1985 phone call – he's gone on to publish two novels, work for 'New York's best newspapers in the heyday of print' and, now, swoon over the Los Angeles home of the 'exceptionally talented' Matthias Vriens (page 108).

KIM JONES PORTRAIT: NIKOLAI VON BISMARCK

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Editor's Letter

March 2023

On a shelf in my kitchen sit several postcards. Among them: an abstract by Helen Frankenthaler; a relief from Thorvaldsens Museum in Copenhagen; a raspberry-robed cardinal by Andrea Mantegna; and a clutch of May-flowering irises painted in 1935 by Cedric Morris, the artist and plantsman who plays a pivotal role in this month's issue of *The World of Interiors*. As the title of my postcard suggests, the iris on our cover has sprung a little early this year but we hope you'll forgive this poetic licence in the name of great beauty. 'Benton Menace', our imperial-purple cover-girl, was photographed at Benton End, Morris's Suffolk home, by the fashion photographer Tim Walker (page 130). The resulting pages are sublime: an ode to artistry and collaboration, with Walker's bewitching images celebrating the exuberance of Morris's planting and painting, while Olivia Laing's words reignite the artist's love affair with his most prized plant. As Laing quotes in her piece, 'The greatest crime at Benton End was to be boring!' An antidote to monotony came in the form of good food, wicked conversation and a roll call of visiting writers and artists, among their number Beth Chatto, Lucian Freud and Maggi Hambling. With these words ringing in my ears, I'm relieved to say what follows is far from banal; in fact, we host a cast of impressive characters.

Last summer, Hamish Bowles accompanied photographer Ricardo Labougle on a visit to La Colle Noire (page 84), the couturier Christian Dior's château in Provence; a house which, much like Benton End, saw many a luminary pass through its doors (there's a doodle in the visitor's book by Chagall, for goodness sake!). For Dior, though, it was the rose that became something of a talisman. The May rose was, as Amy Fine Collins writes, 'both a signature flower at La Colle Noire and a heart note of his first fragrance, Miss Dior'.

A little further afield is Aïssa Dione, an artist and fabric designer whose story is one of grit and dedication. She has spent three decades reviving and reinventing the manufacture of Senegal's traditional cloth, *manjak*, and in doing so has created a sustainable model that not only provides vital employment but celebrates local craft. Jareh Das dips into her world on page 100.

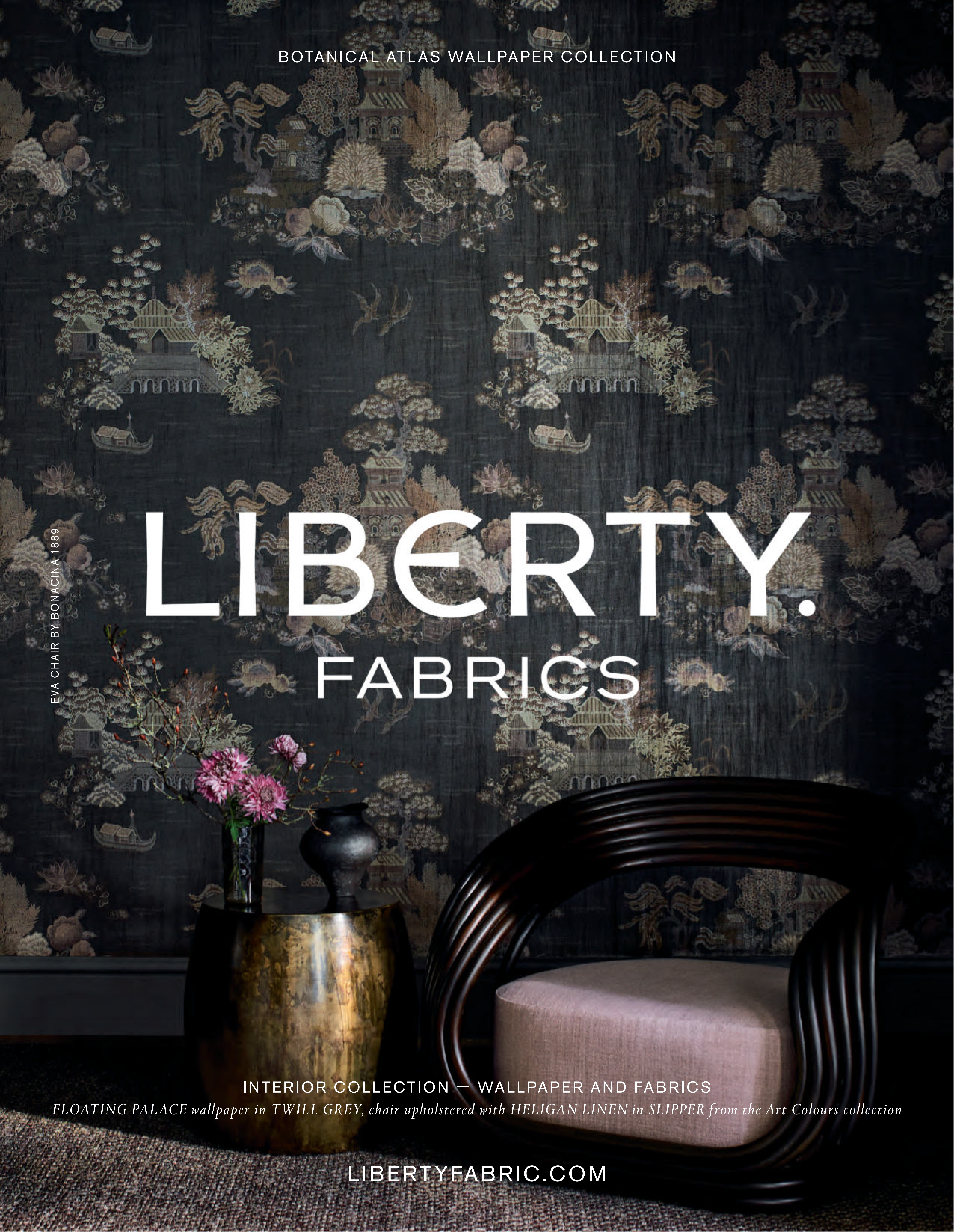
PHOTOGRAPH: TIM WALKER

If walls could talk one suspects those at Castle Haines would raise many an eyebrow. As writer William Norwich explains on page 108, this is not simply a yarn about good taste: it's the tale of matinée idol-turned-decorator Billy Haines and his hard-won legacy. His Los Angeles house is now owned and carefully cared for by photographer/creative director Matthias Vriens, for whom Haines continues to be a source of inspiration. Vriens's own line of fantastical designs – mushroom lamps, Etruscan urns, shell-encrusted tables et al – takes centre stage at the castle.

A very different kind of fantasy plays out in an Alpine chalet in St Moritz (page 120). Brooding darkly within the mountain landscape, the house, which is home to an impressive roster of artists and belongs to the owner of a luxury fashion label, was constructed from larch and torched to an inky black. Here, by contrast, high drama is the order of the day.

Perhaps you can detect a subtle, somewhat stylish thread emerging? Because the Parisian apartment with the envy-inducing, cinematic views on page 140 is owned by another fashion exec, Felipe Oliveira Baptista, formerly of Kenzo. And then there's Mitchell Owens's riotous essay on photographer Horst P. Horst (page 61), followed by Robin Muir's hymn to tartan on page 64 in which he charts the evolution of the textile from traditional to transgressive; a story that feels all the more potent given the recent death of Vivienne Westwood, the trailblazing British designer who, as Muir writes, played her part in restoring tartan as '"the cloth of dissent" [and as] official supplier to the punk movement'.

Whether creating an extraordinary garment, an Edenic garden or a beautiful room, the ingredients in this issue remain largely the same: colour, structure, texture, sensuality, a singular point of view, perhaps a dose of rebellion thrown in for good measure. So I welcome you to our March issue, where we revel in all things stylish, from horticulture to haute couture ⊛ *Emily Tobin, acting editor*



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FLOATING PALACE wallpaper in TWILL GREY, chair upholstered with HELIGAN LINEN in SLIPPER from the Art Colours collection

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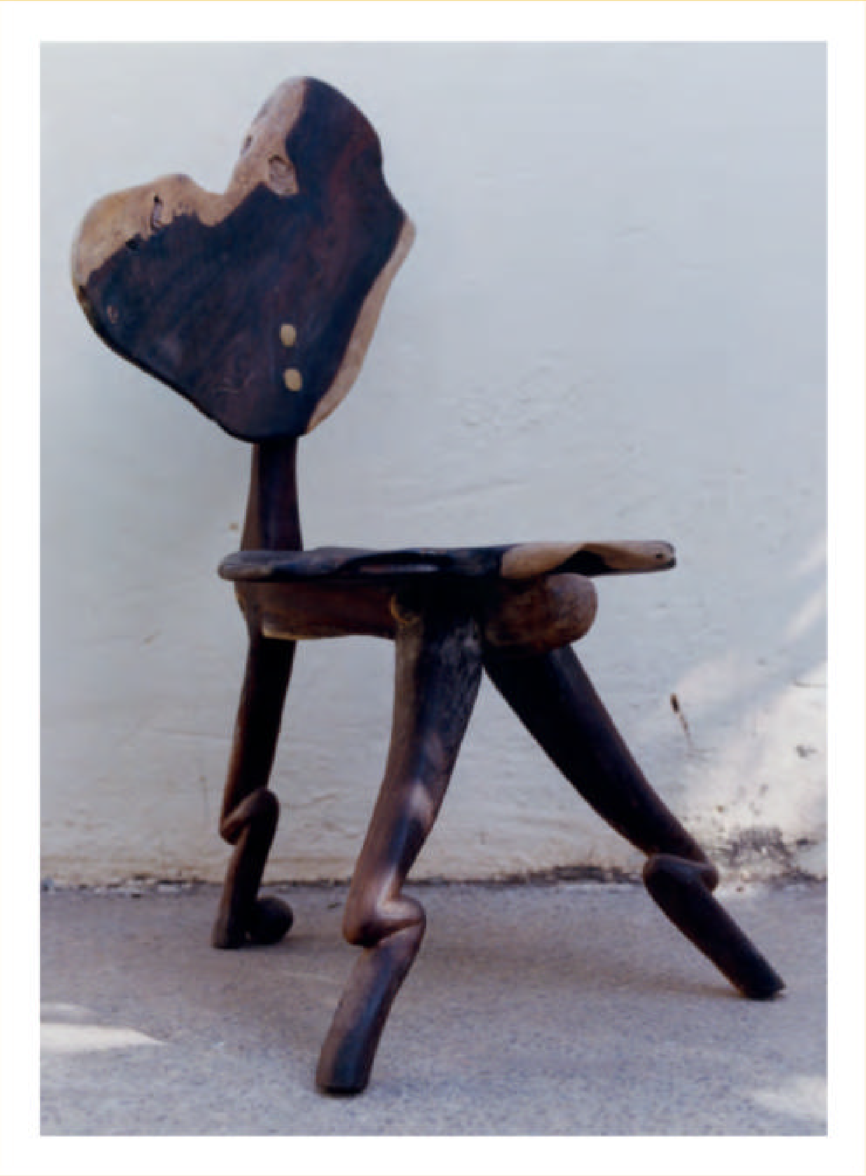
ANTENNAE

Dissolve a pearl in a glass of fizz with us this March as we blow a lacquer-lipped kiss to all things gilded and glamorous. Our stylists open with aplomb on to a gallery of knockout door décor, building up to a strong finish – a flat matt finish, to be precise, diffracted through a spectrum of princely paint colours, displayed on a cast of plaster pieces: lustreless, granted, but never lacklustre. In brighter News, we've taken a shine to graphic rugs, brilliant glassware and Alvar Aalto's particular purity turned chic and cheerful. Then it's oysters for lunch, if you can bear it, served with some staggering daggers so as to free their comestible cabochons. If those tactile pleasures are just to your taste, then hold on to your sporran: we're unravelling the rich and chequered history of tartan, from Bonnie Prince Charlie to Alexander McQueen. Laura Ashley joins the red carpet this issue, alongside a catwalk of exhibition darlings: soft-hued Impressionist belles, folk fashionistas and Vermeer's enigmatic showstopper. Then we've books to entrance you – including the photographer Horst's chin chin to the beguiling 1930s *bon ton* – and a dizzying array of revolving bookcases to boot: steals on wheels all. Join us, if you would, in the salon...



A chair by Balla Niang, a talented designer among a new generation of Senegalese artisans. See page 100. Photograph: Maciek Pożoga

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What's in the air this month

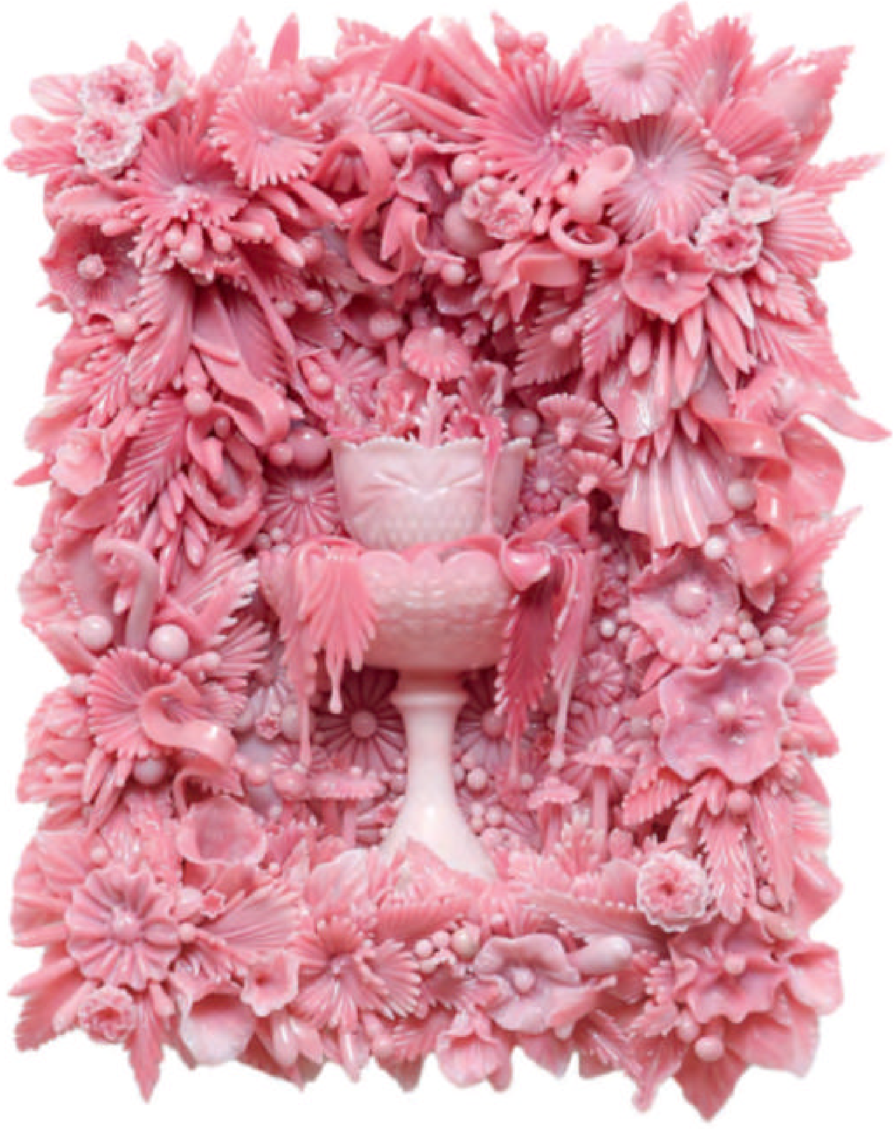
by Ariadne Fletcher, David Lipton, Mitchell Owens and Amy Sherlock

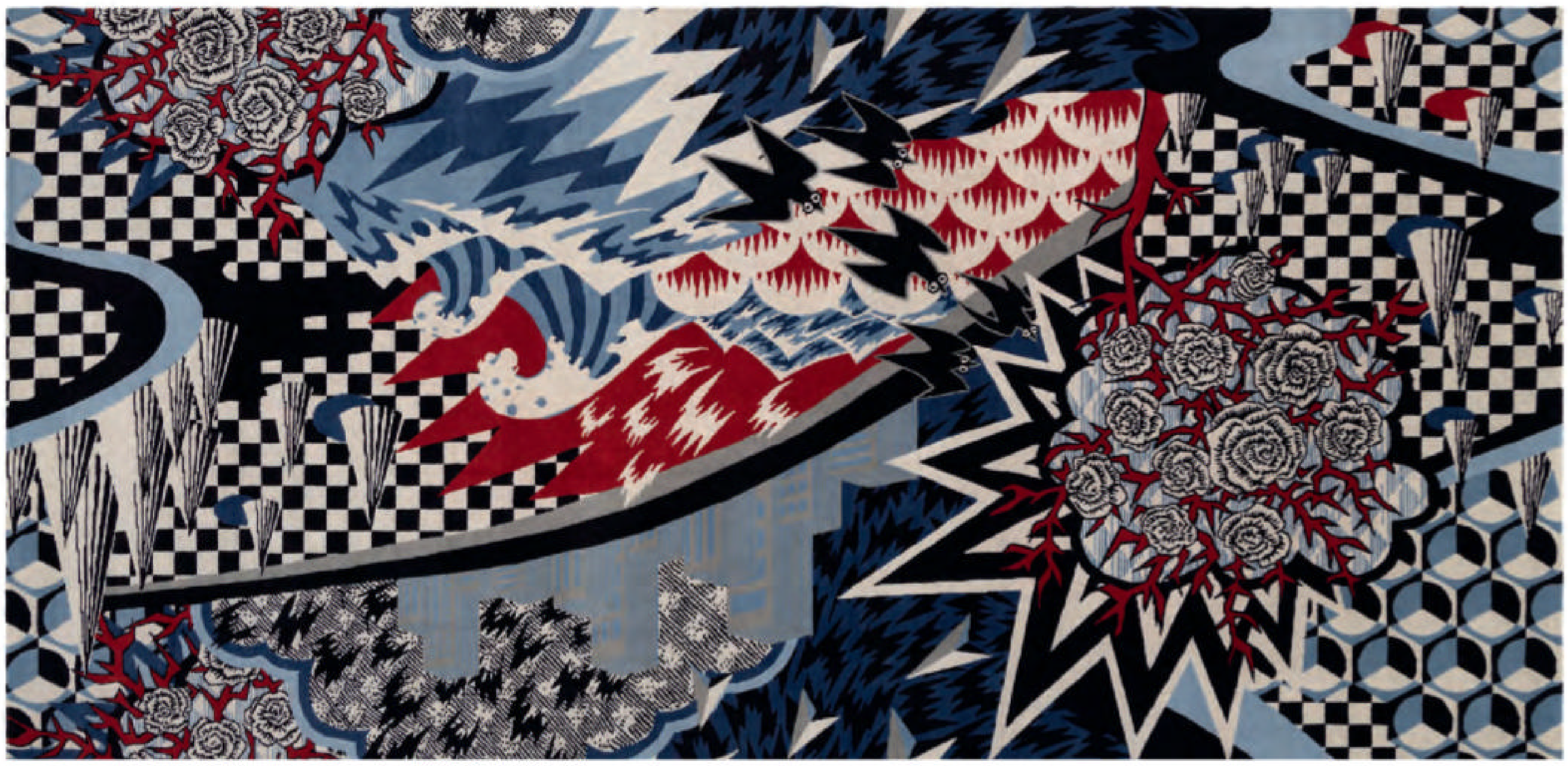
Raven's Rainbow

Bold colour might not be the first thing that springs to mind when thinking about Le Corbusier, patron saint of the Modernist white box. But, as anyone familiar with the De Stijl-like composition of his Unité d'Habitation in Marseille knows, the man nicknamed 'the Raven' was distinctly susceptible to the pleasures of polychromy. Invited to design a collection for the Swiss wallpaper manufacturer Salubra in 1931, he produced a palette of 43 muted shades; a second collection in 1959 added 20 bolder colours, to be combined to dynamic spatial and emotional effect. Licensed by Les Couleurs Suisse, these trademarked hues have swapped concrete surfaces for something altogether softer in a new collection of blankets from Tekla (above), Danish purveyors of minimalist-luxe bed- and bathware. An initial offering in supersoft Spanish mohair was released in four colourways in October, while a second limited-edition collection, featuring seven further designs, will be available from 21 February. Woven in Scotland from lambswool and cashmere, the blankets take inspiration from Villa Le Lac, the small home on Lake Geneva that Le Corbusier designed for his parents in the early 1920s, where they lived until their deaths. Simple, functional and beautiful, Villa Le Lac embodies the Corbusian values that have most inspired Tekla. It's also playful in its combination of materials and colours. 'There's a common belief that Le Corbusier was a minimalist,' explains Charlie Hedin, the brand's founder and creative director. 'But we found archive photos that revealed his personal living spaces were filled with different textures, colours and objects.' Presumably, these also included blankets – after all, Swiss winters can be harsh. *Visit teklafabrics.com* AS

Petunia Melt

With roots stretching back to the original Jamestown Settlement in 1608, glass-working was one of the very first industries that Europeans brought to North America. Due to the complex process of making, blowing and/or cutting decorative glass, only the wealthy could afford it – until the invention of the glass-pressing machine in 1825 opened it up for the masses. Today, US artist Amber Cowan is breathing new life into the material. With rejuvenation and reuse at the heart of her work, Cowan sources cullet – or glass scraps – from now defunct manufacturers, which she then remelts and reinvents through the painstaking





techniques of flameworking, hot-sculpting and glassblowing. Her jam-packed designs – an embodiment of *horror vacui* if ever there was one – feature tight clusters of fragile flora and fauna, producing the effect of a wildly ornate diorama (opposite, right). This crowding of organic forms evokes an endlessly reproducing entity, teeming with life. Duly awed, North Lands Creative is set to bring a selection of Cowan's work to this year's Collect art fair, which runs 3–5 March at Somerset House. *Somerset House, Strand, London WC2 (collectfair.org.uk)* AF

Three-legged Ace

Clean, formal, functional: the 'Model 60' stacking stool is almost frigid. In his pursuit of perfection, Finnish designer Alvar Aalto dashed dozens of prototypes against the floor, to test his design's structural integrity. Yet, its very sparseness – three wooden legs, a circular seat, all engineered to eschew joinery – allows embellishment to intrude beyond Aalto's vision. Produced by Artek since 1933, the 'Model 60' was snapped up by fabric manufacturers Maharam, initially as studio seating for the design team, and marked with the brand's idiom, being upholstered in, fittingly, 60 of its own textiles.

Although only ten have been put into production, the breadth of possibility is testament to Maharam's exuberance. Some are fun, bright and pop; others more cerebral. Here (below left), a jaunty Josef Hoffmann print cleverly gestures to the early inspirations of Aalto himself, who studied under the Austrian at the Wiener Werkstätte. For all their cold formalism, these stools have wound up in the embrace of rather warmer coverings. Shown: 'Maharam Edition Artek Stool 60', $495. *Visit maharam.com* DL

Hallucinogenic Rugs

Hokusai meets Lichtenstein. Entering the art world with a bang – or, as the case may be, a tidal wave – in the 1990s, design duo Eley Kishimoto have since left a decisive impression. They are the princes of print, creators of a warped world seemingly seen through the topsy-turvy eyes of MC Escher, which is infinitely transferable. Cladding walls and bodies alike – they've designed prints for fashion greats, from McQueen to Marc Jacobs – now their work is even underfoot. Their latest feat, alongside seven other designers, is to commit their world to carpet, in collaboration with Floor Story. Presented as part of the Paris decoration fair Maison & Objet, the capsule collection highlights the work of British designers particularly adept at an idiosyncratic approach. All of Eley Kishimoto's rugs are tributes to repetition: illusionistic houndstooth, pixelated quilts. 'Graphic Fairytale' (top; from £3,045) is undoubtedly the star, a shining homage to the power of prints, drawing on those already referenced masters of infinite reproduction. The message is clear: the more prints the merrier! *Visit floorstory.co.uk* DL

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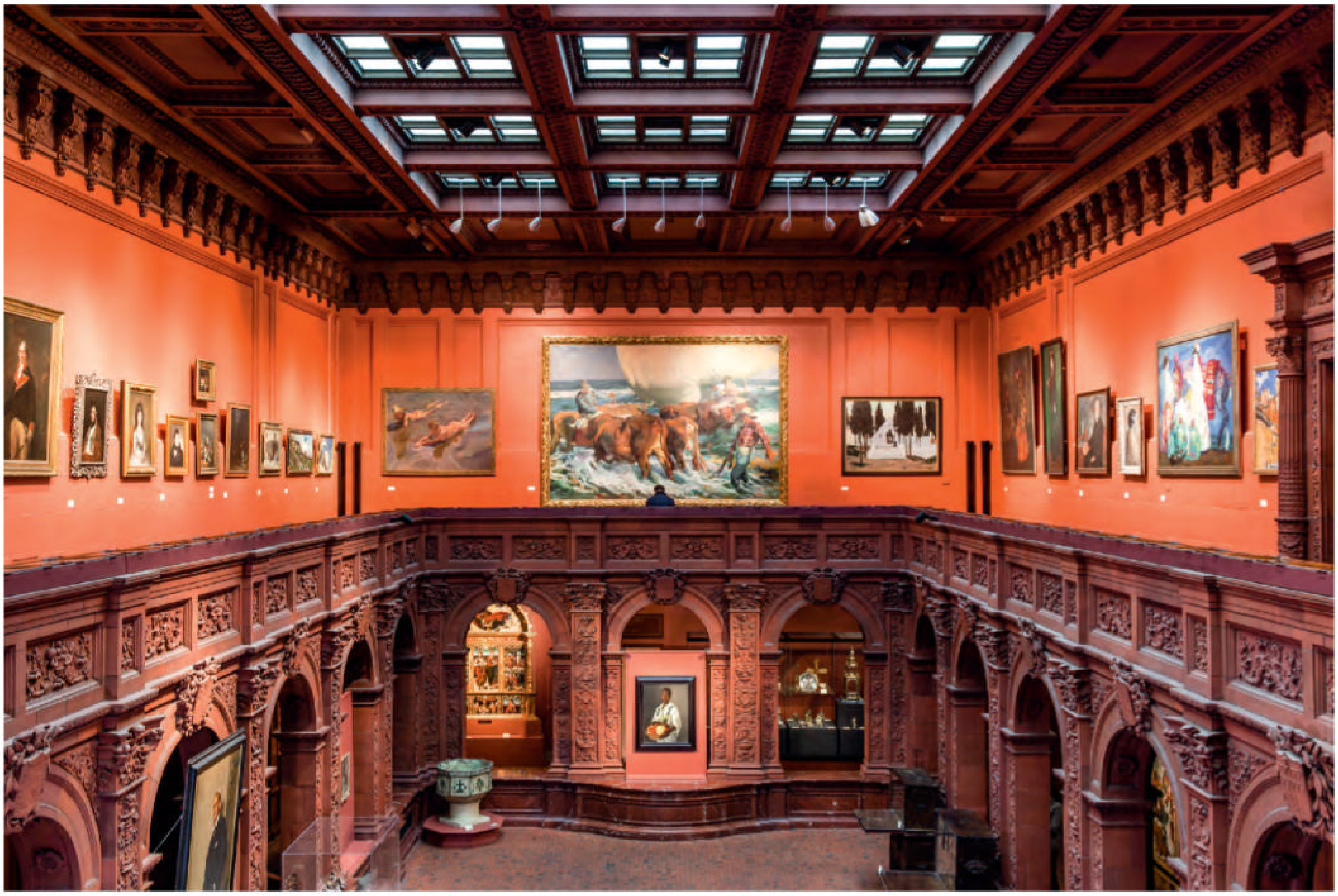
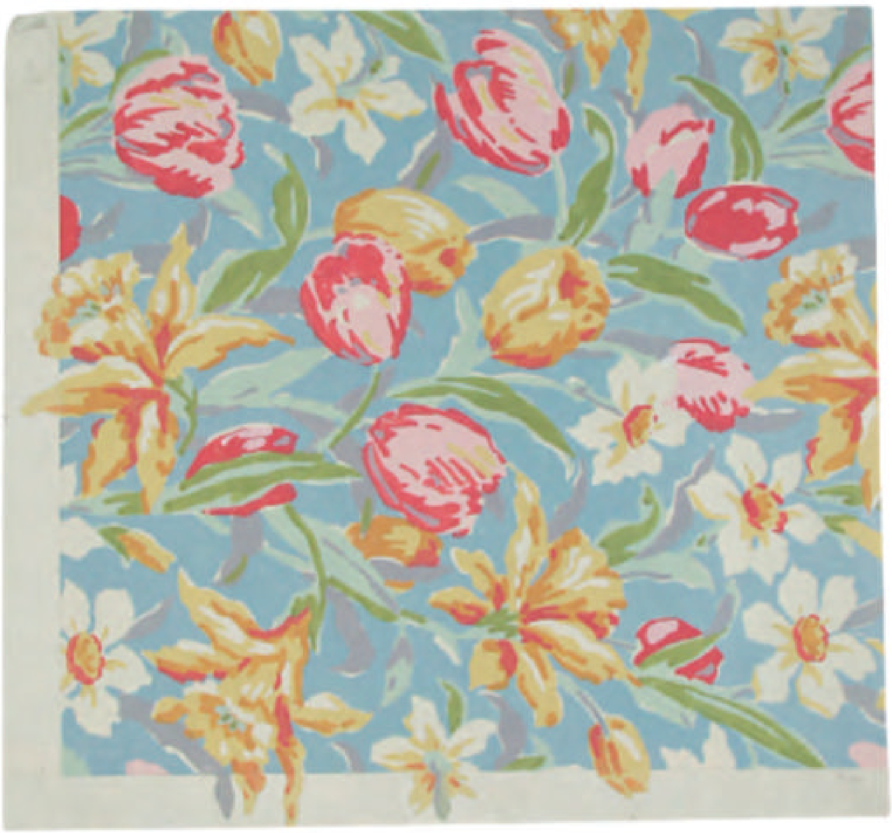


Spanish Steps

For devotees of Manhattan's Hispanic Society Museum & Library, 2023 couldn't have come soon enough. 'To the public, we looked like a closed institution', says former Louvre and Kimbell Museum of Art curator Guillaume Kientz. He became director last year, five years after the obscure but remarkable repository of Hispanic-diaspora art and artefacts shut down for a renovation, with the assistance of museum-whisperer architect Annabelle Selldorf, that is still underway. A refreshed corner of the palatial Beaux-Arts complex that overlooks the Hudson River reopens on 31 March: the Stygian, double-height main court (top) and the Sorolla Vision of Spain Gallery, which features 14 enormous cultural scenes by the eponymous Valencian Impressionist, who died in 1923. 'There's no way you can celebrate Sorolla's centennial without the Sorolla gallery being open,' Kientz says. 'We had to raise a few million to make it happen, but we did it.' A selection of 150 from the hundreds of thousands of objects assembled by railroad heir Archer Huntington is now on view in *Spain and the Hispanic World*, an exhibition that runs until 10 April at the Royal Academy, London. Among them is *The Black Duchess*, Francisco Goya's famous 1797 portrait of the 13th Duchess of Alba, dressed in lacy mourning and pointing down at the artist's name scribbled in the earth at her feet. *Visit hispanicsociety.org; royalacademy.org.uk* MO

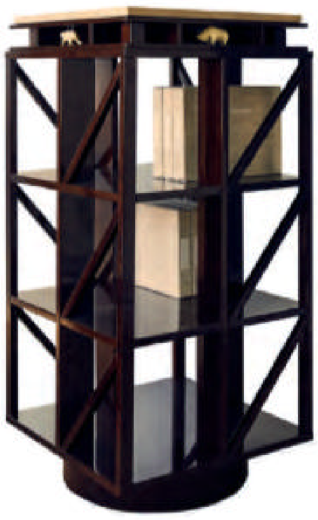
Pit Peonies

Happy birthday, Laura Ashley. It seemed, when the storied British brand went into administration in 2020, that it might never see its 70th year of trading. But, after a successful 2021, which included a collaboration with the clothing line Batsheva, the company (now owned by Boston-based restructuring firm Gordon Brothers) continues its reboot. To celebrate its founding in 1953, the year Laura and her husband first began screen-printing fabric at their kitchen table in Pimlico, the brand has been digging into its archive: more than 1,000 original sketches, designs, items of clothing and fabric samples, all housed hundreds of metres below the Cheshire plain in a working salt mine. Several prints are being reissued, among them 'Tulips' (below), a bold floral from the early 1990s that still has all the freshness of a spring bouquet. 'We loved its loose painterly style,' says Helen Ashmore, Laura Ashley's head of design. 'It brings a wonderful play on nostalgia.' *Visit next.co.uk/laura-ashley* AS ❀



Real Page Turners

Prepare for revolution as David Lipton takes rotating bookcases for a spin



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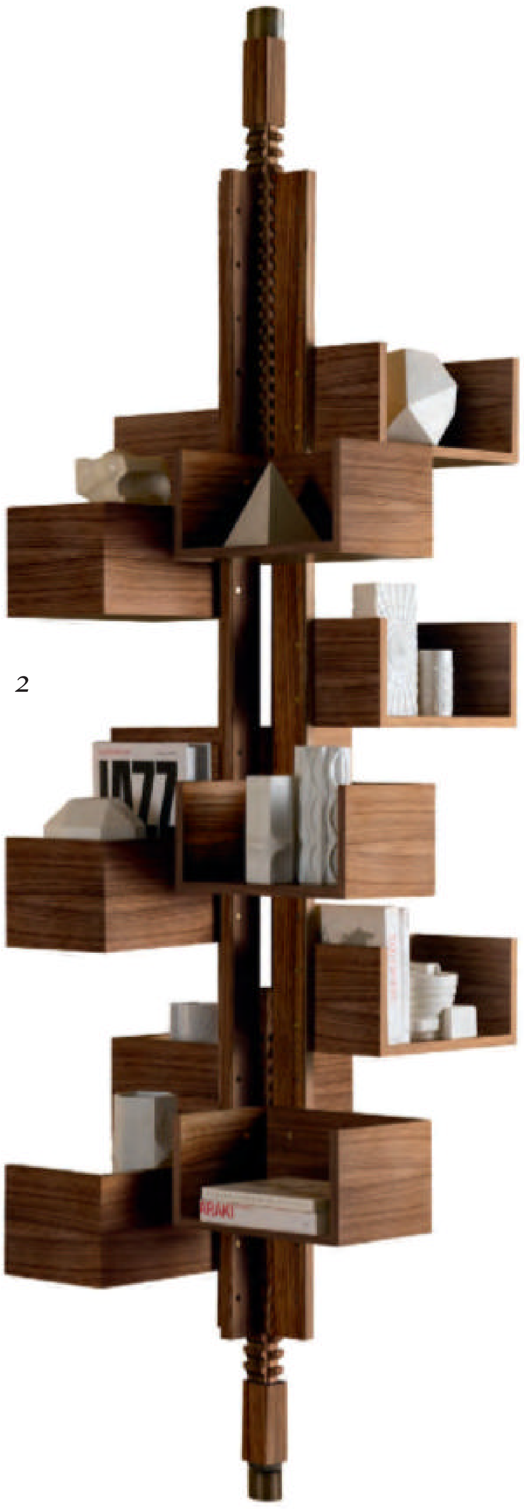

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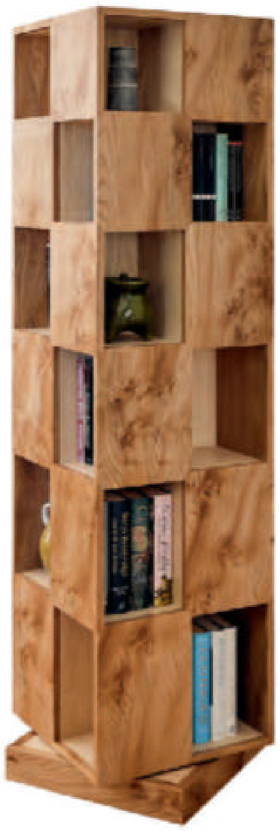

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1 Rotating library, £7,365 approx, Casiraghi. 2 'Albero', by Gianfranco Frattini, £16,440, Poltrona Frau.
3 'Wilde', £135, The Masie. 4 'Whirly-gig', £8,650, Matthew Burt Furniture. 5 'Bruno', from £12,360 approx, India Mahdavi.
6 'Ptolomeo x4', by Bruno Rainaldi, from £1,423 approx, Opinion Ciatti. 7 'Carousel', $1,110, Levenger.
All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ⊛

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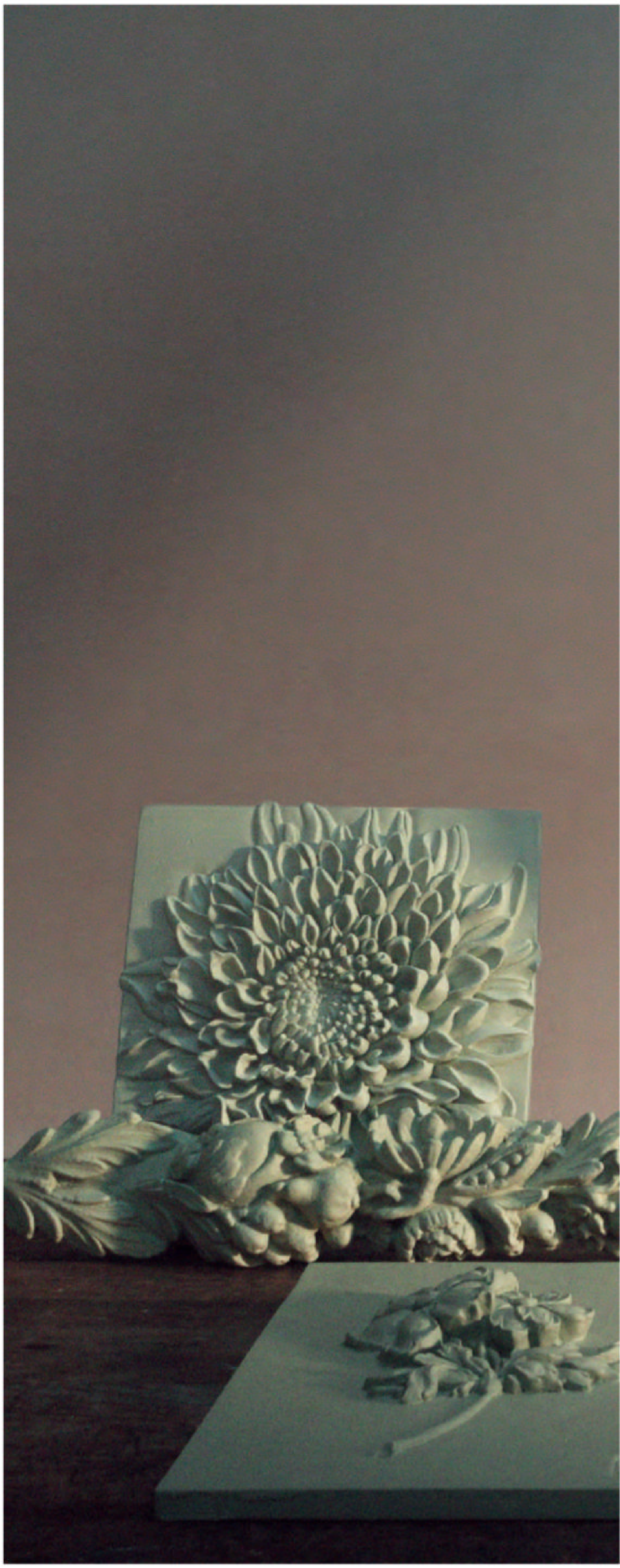
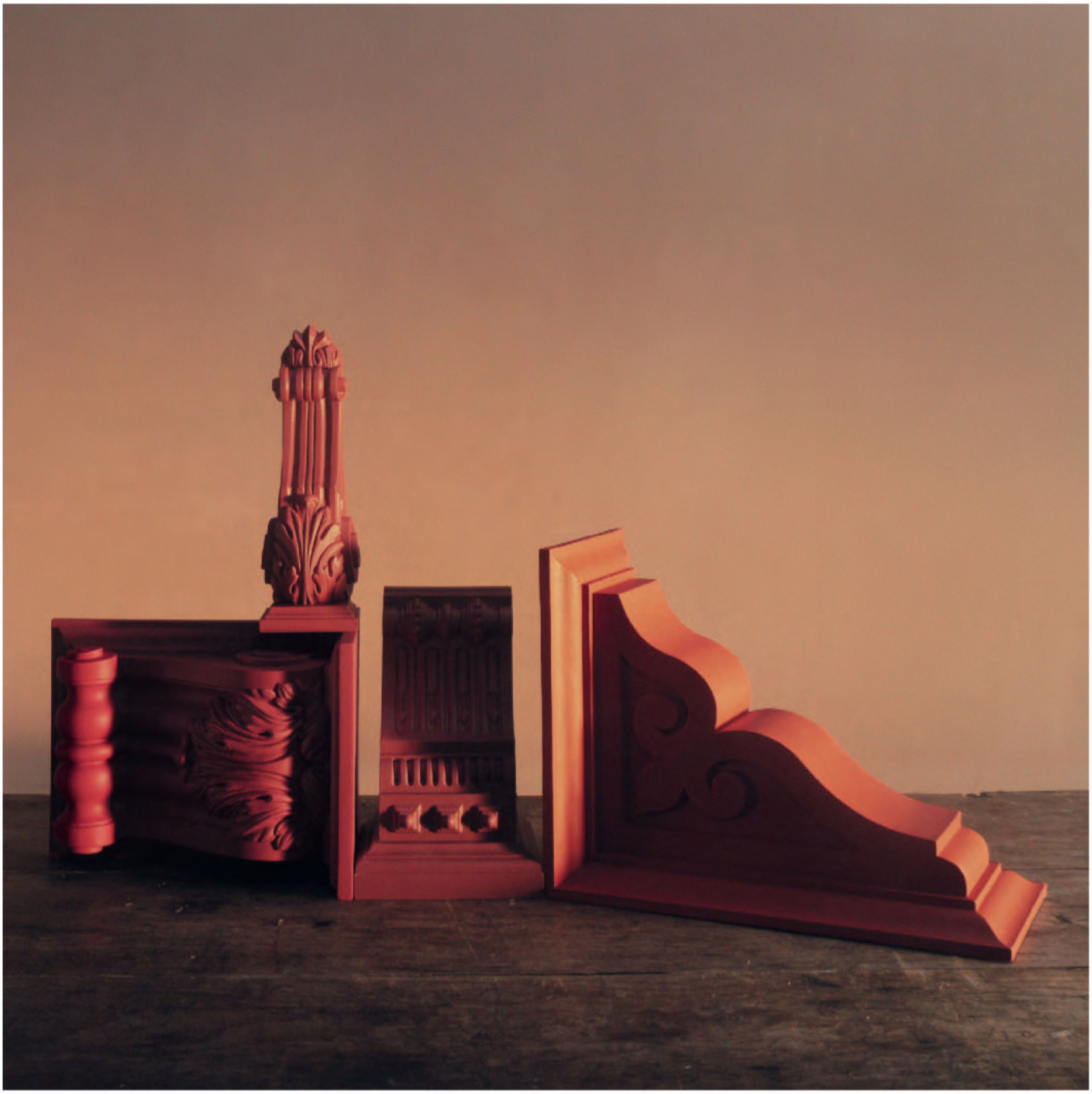
Cast in Outer Darkness

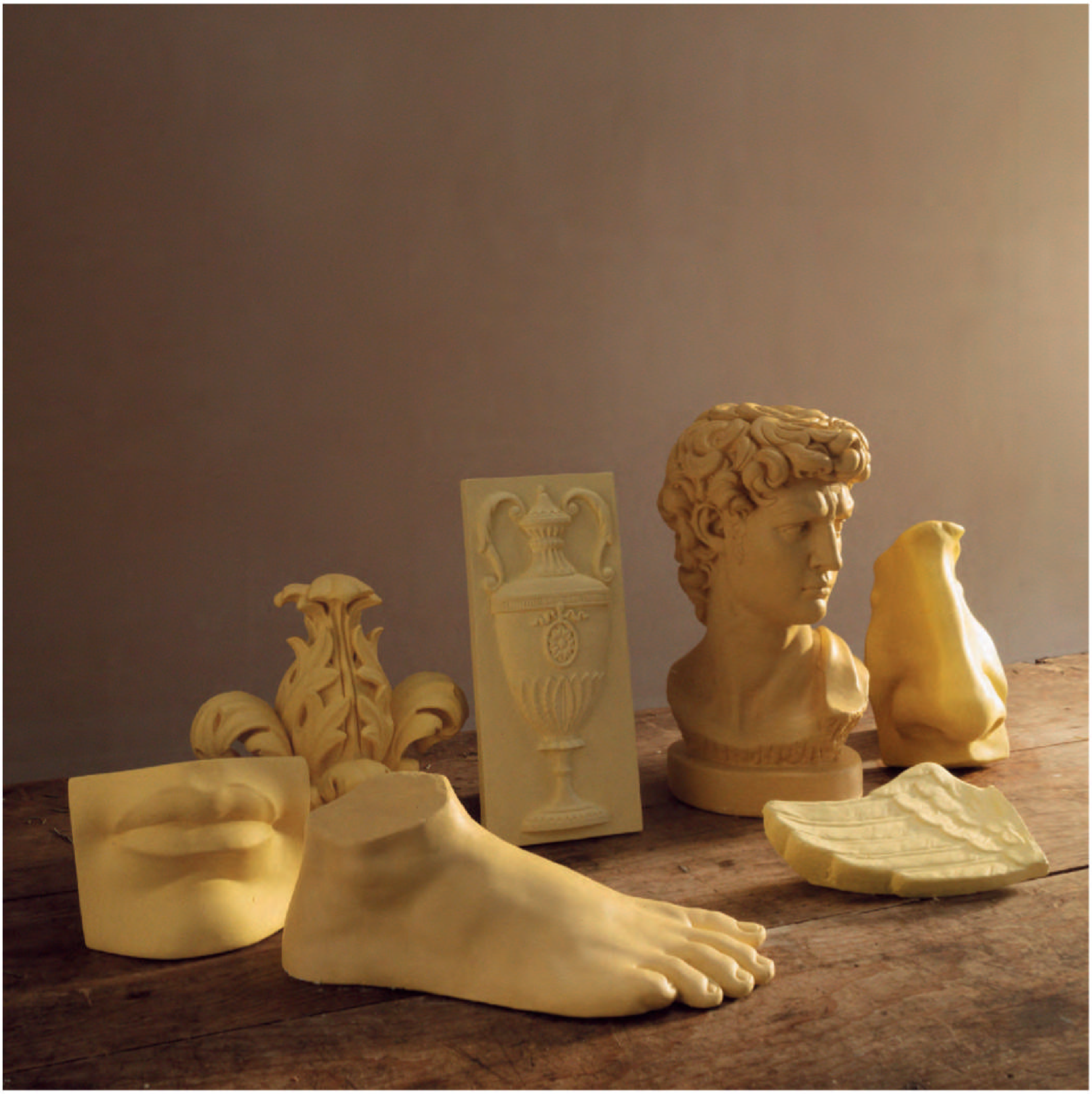
Spent ages thinking about your next colour scheme? Perhaps it's time to get radically *un*reflective. Intended for use on wood, metal and plaster, Farrow & Ball's Dead Flat paint is a super-matt finish, based on an 18th-century original. Its velvety, sheen-free look is something you should be – dimly – aware of, says Gianluca Longo. Photography: Oskar Proctor



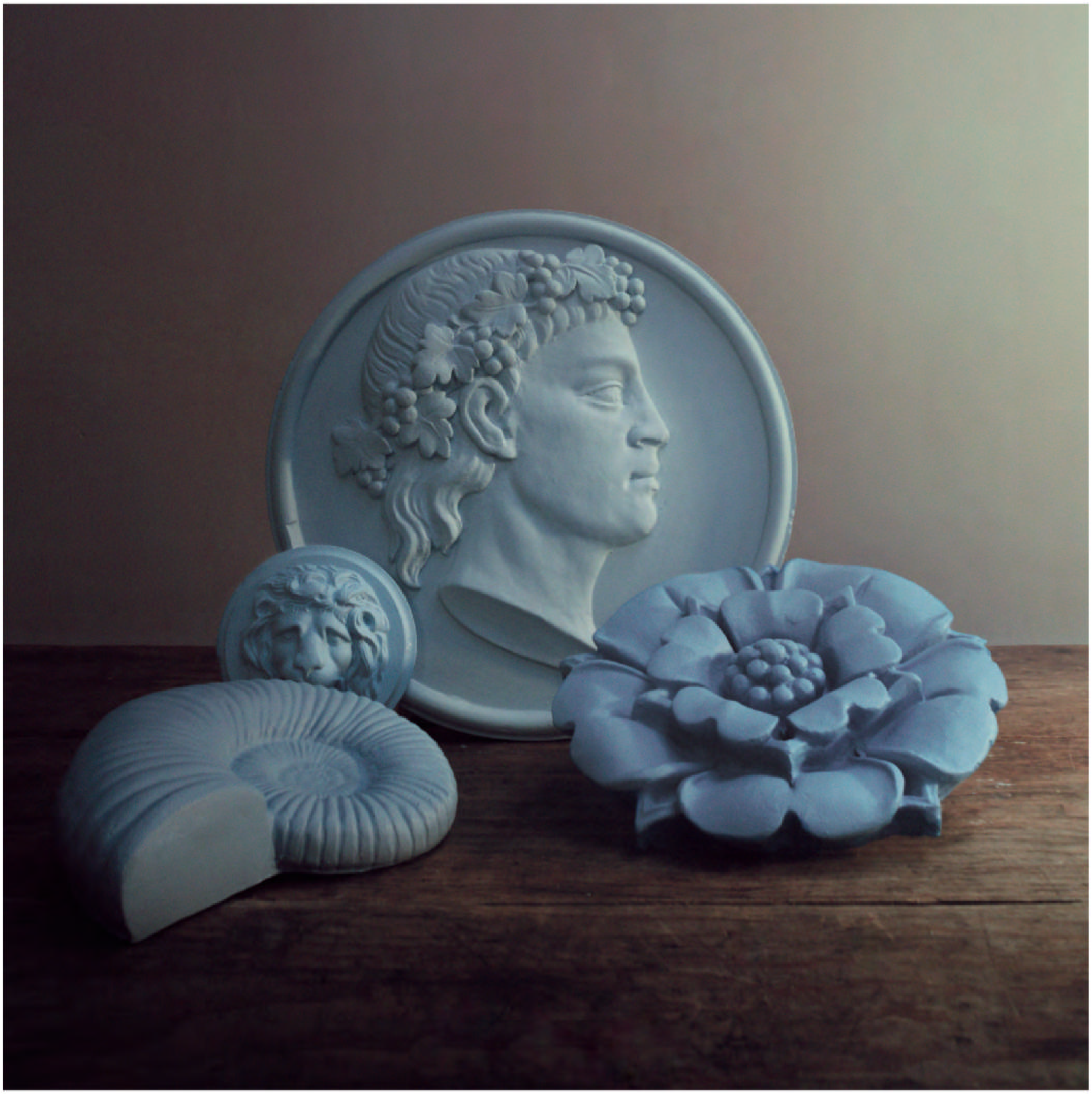
From left: floral scroll, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; painted in 'Ball Green'. Chrysanthemum panel, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; painted in 'Vert de Terre'. Anemone panel, £300, Geoffrey Preston; painted in 'Lichen'. 'Raffle Leaf II' panel, £250, Geoffrey Preston; painted in 'Cooking Apple Green'. Rose panel, £300, Geoffrey Preston; painted in 'Ball Green'. 'Roman Vine' panel mould, £21 per 1.7m length, Stevensons of Norwich; painted in 'Lichen'. Paint throughout: Dead Flat, £75 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book



From left: medium decorative corbel, £59.50, Stevensons of Norwich; painted in 'Rectory Red'. Small decorative corbel, £52, Stevensons of Norwich; painted in 'Incarnadine'. 'Pattern A' corbel, £59.50, Stevensons of Norwich; painted in 'Eating Room Red'. Large 'Harleston' corbel, £67.50, Stevensons of Norwich; painted in 'Bamboozle'. Paint throughout: Dead Flat, £75 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. All prices include VAT. *For suppliers' details see Address Book*



From left: lips panel, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; fleur-de-lis scroll, stylist's own; both painted in 'Citron'. Foot, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; painted in 'Yellow Ground'. Urn plaque, £49.80, Stevensons of Norwich; painted in 'Dayroom Yellow'. 'David' bust, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; painted in 'Sudbury Yellow'. Wing, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; painted in 'Dayroom Yellow'. Nose, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; painted in 'Babouche'. Paint throughout: Dead Flat, £75 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book



From left: ammonite, from £50, Stoned and Plastered; painted in 'Lulworth Blue'. Lion's head medallion, £60, George Jackson; painted in 'Kittiwake'. Cameo, £150, George Jackson; painted in 'Parma Grey'. Tudor rose, £185, George Jackson; painted in 'Cook's Blue'. Paint throughout: Dead Flat, £75 for 2.5 litres, Farrow & Ball. All prices include VAT. *For suppliers' details see Address Book* ⊛

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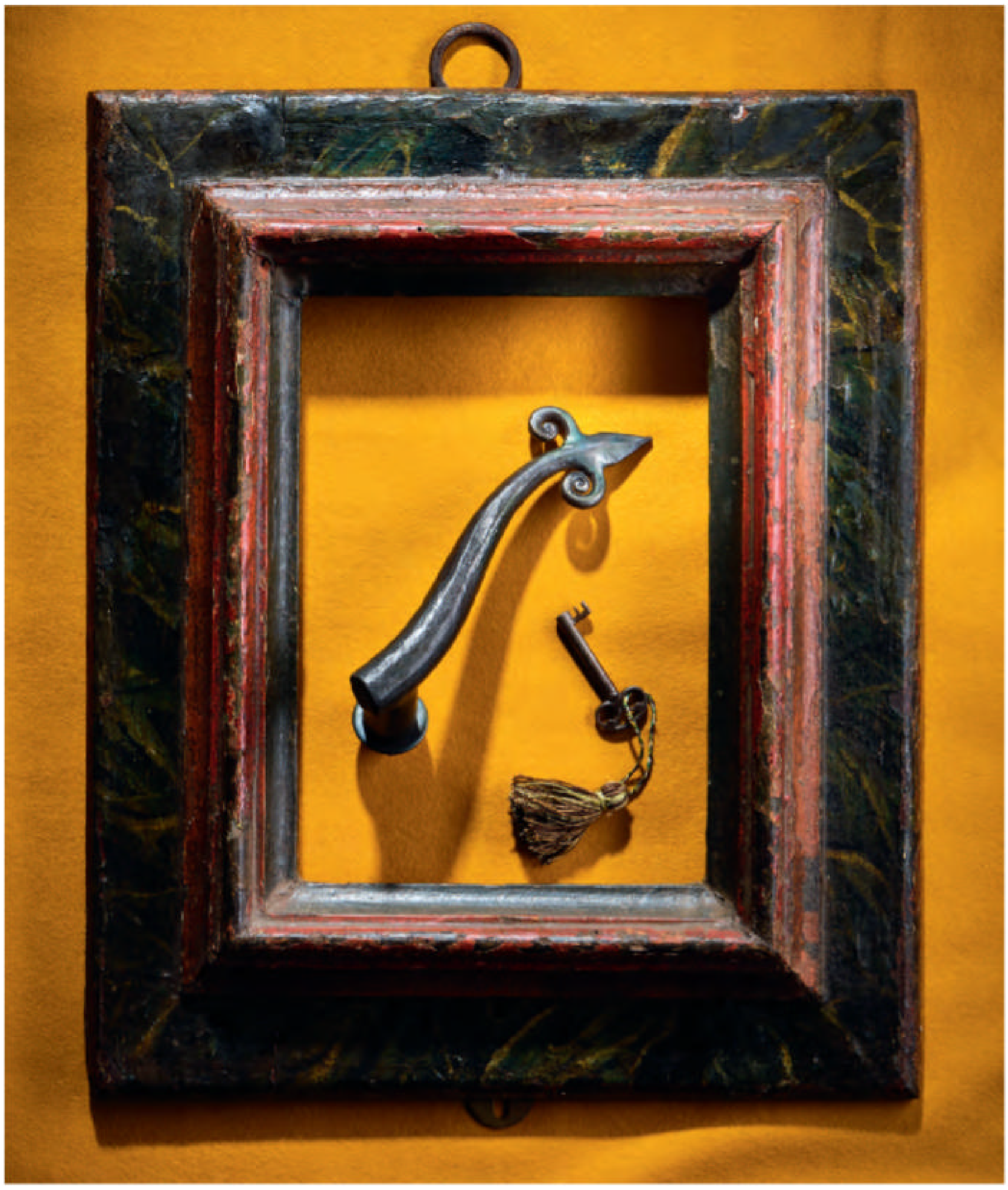
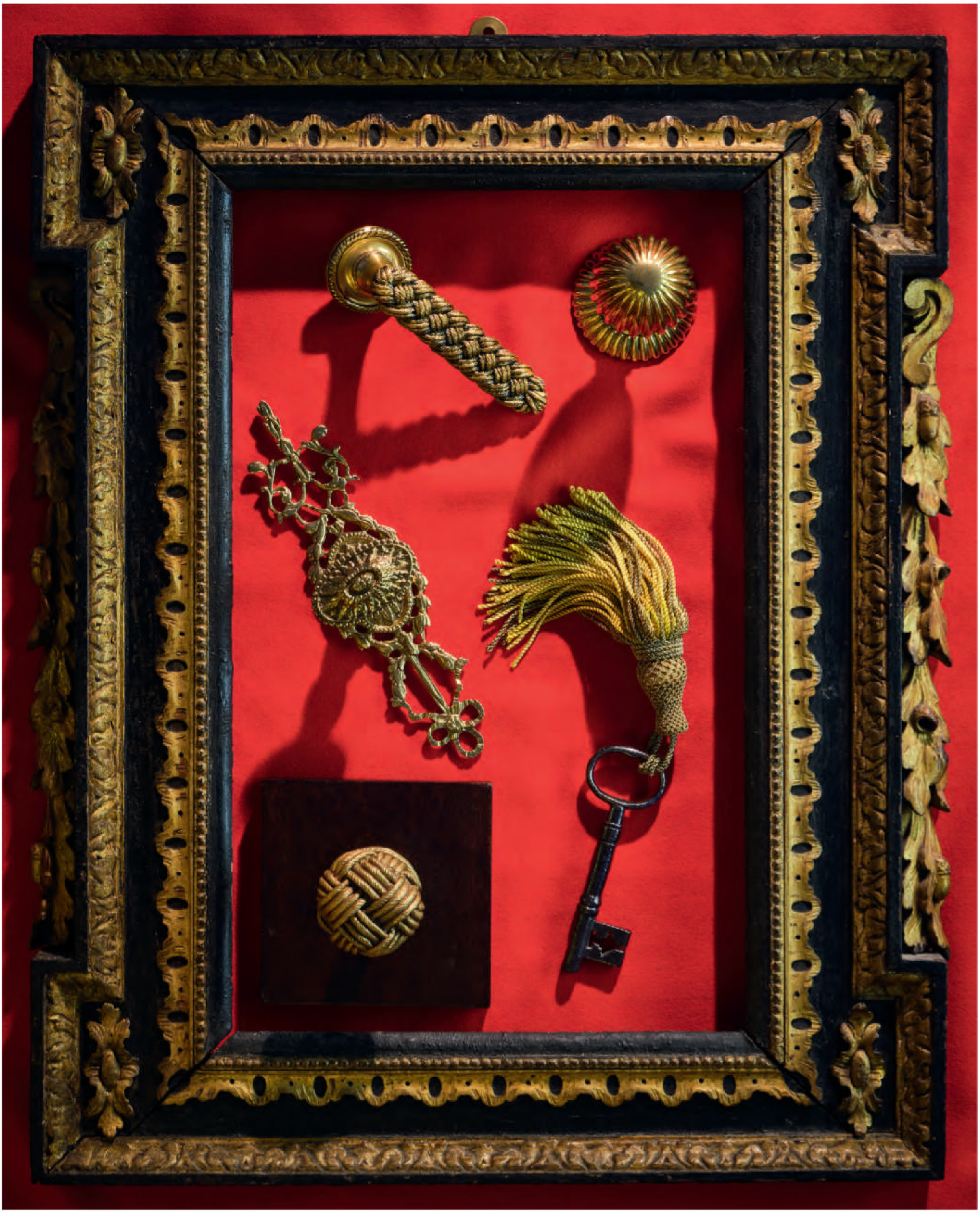
The Lever Art Gallery

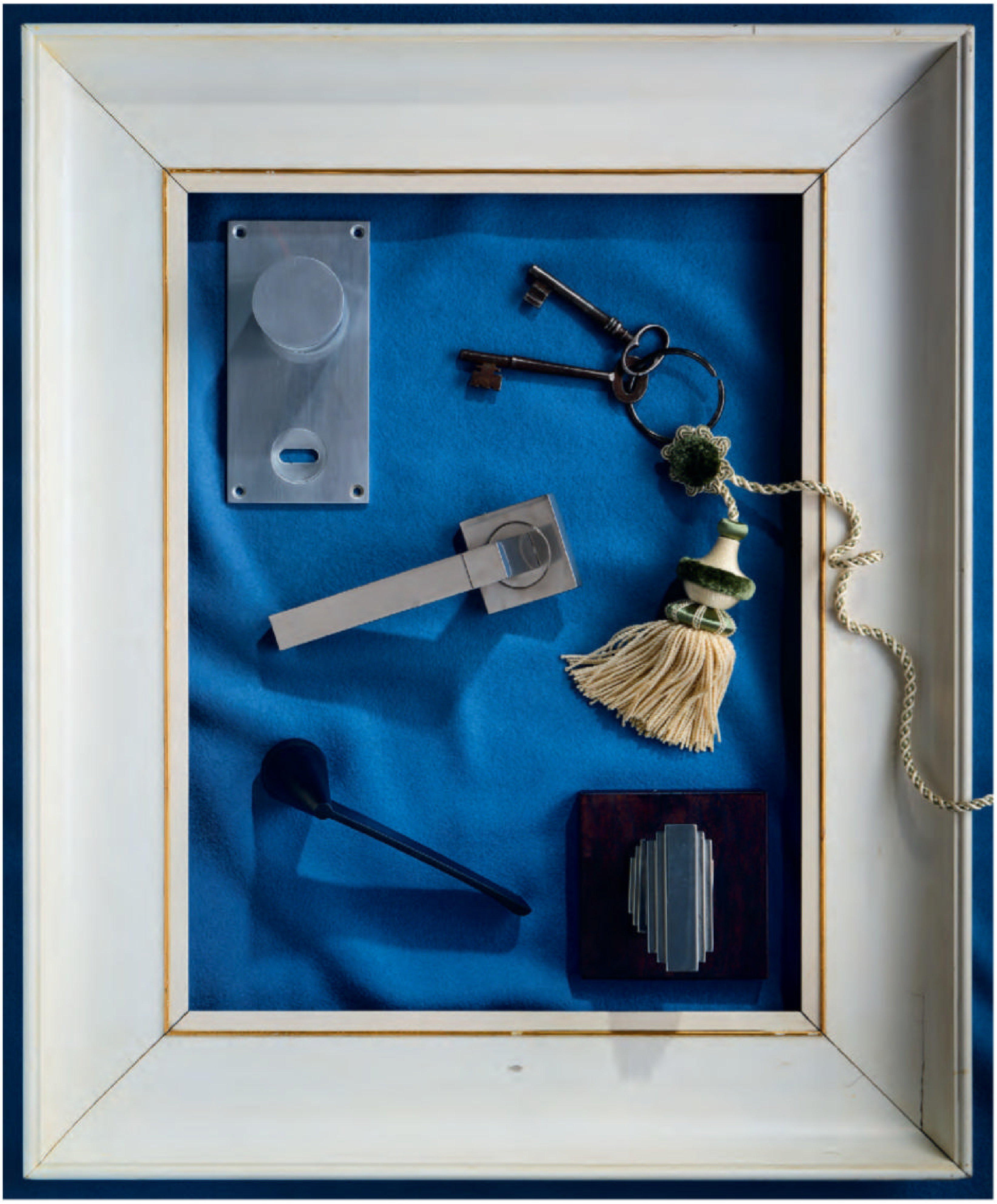
Picture this: door furniture so exquisitely crafted and tactile each piece could almost be an exhibit. Miranda Sinclair latches on to the most display-worthy examples, from the playful to the patinated and polished. Handle with flair! Photography: Neil Mersh



Wrought-iron 'La Crétoise', £176 approx for a pair, Emery & Cie. Spanish 17th-century reverse cassetta frame. Gold doeskin, £226.80 per m, Hainsworth. All prices include VAT. *For suppliers' details see Address Book*



Top row, from left: 'No. 1365 Knot' lever, $1,175, PE Guerin. Ribbed doorknob, £372, Collier Webb. Middle: 'BP1009', £234, Beardmore. Bottom: 'No. 2424 Knot', $1,175, PE Guerin. 'Bodrum' key tassel, £80, Watts 1874. British 18th-century 'William Kent' frame. Scarlet doeskin, £226.80 per m, Hainsworth. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book



From top: aluminium 'Modric', 1960s, by Knud Holscher and Alan Tye, £135 for a pair, Lassco Brunswick House. 'Solid Square', £249 for a pair, Turnstyle Designs. Lever handle, by Gio Ponti, £390, Izé. 'No. 1230', from £490, The Nanz Company. 'Tashi' key tassel and rosette, £240, Watts 1874. French 20th-century artist's frame. Blue doeskin, £226.80 per m, Hainsworth. All prices include VAT. *For suppliers' details see Address Book*

I VASSALLETTI
MAESTRI ARTIGIANI IN TOSCANA
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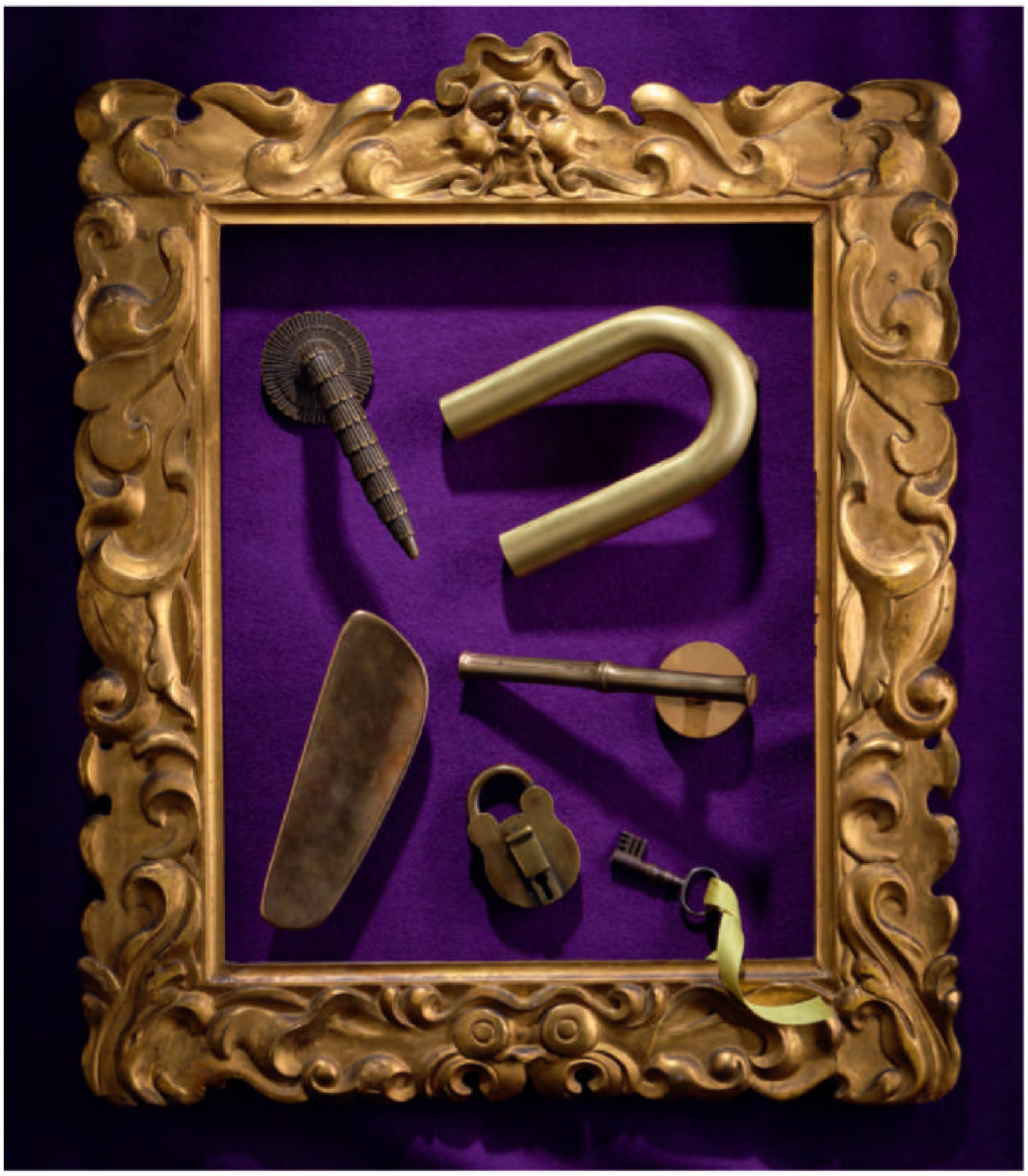
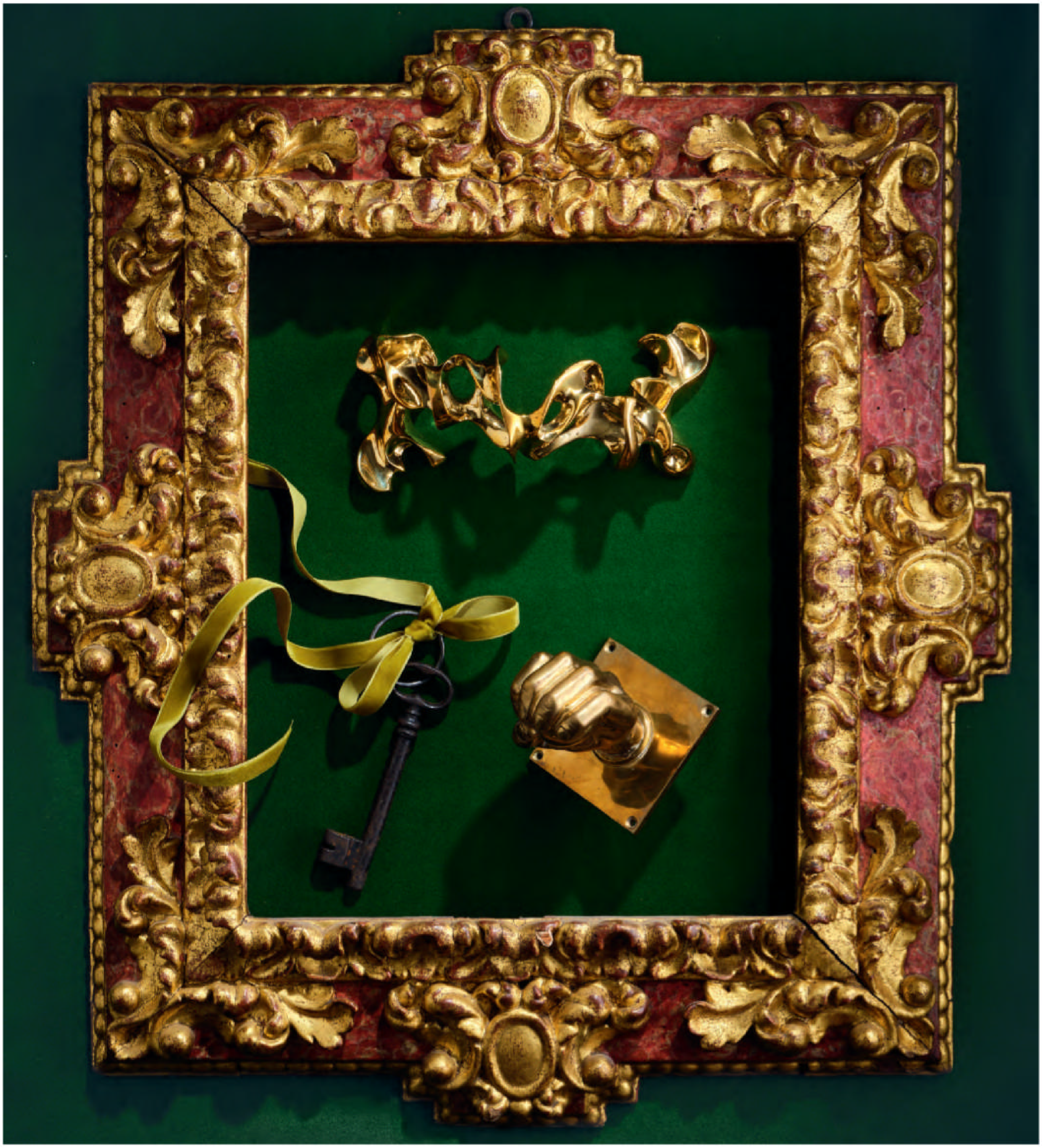
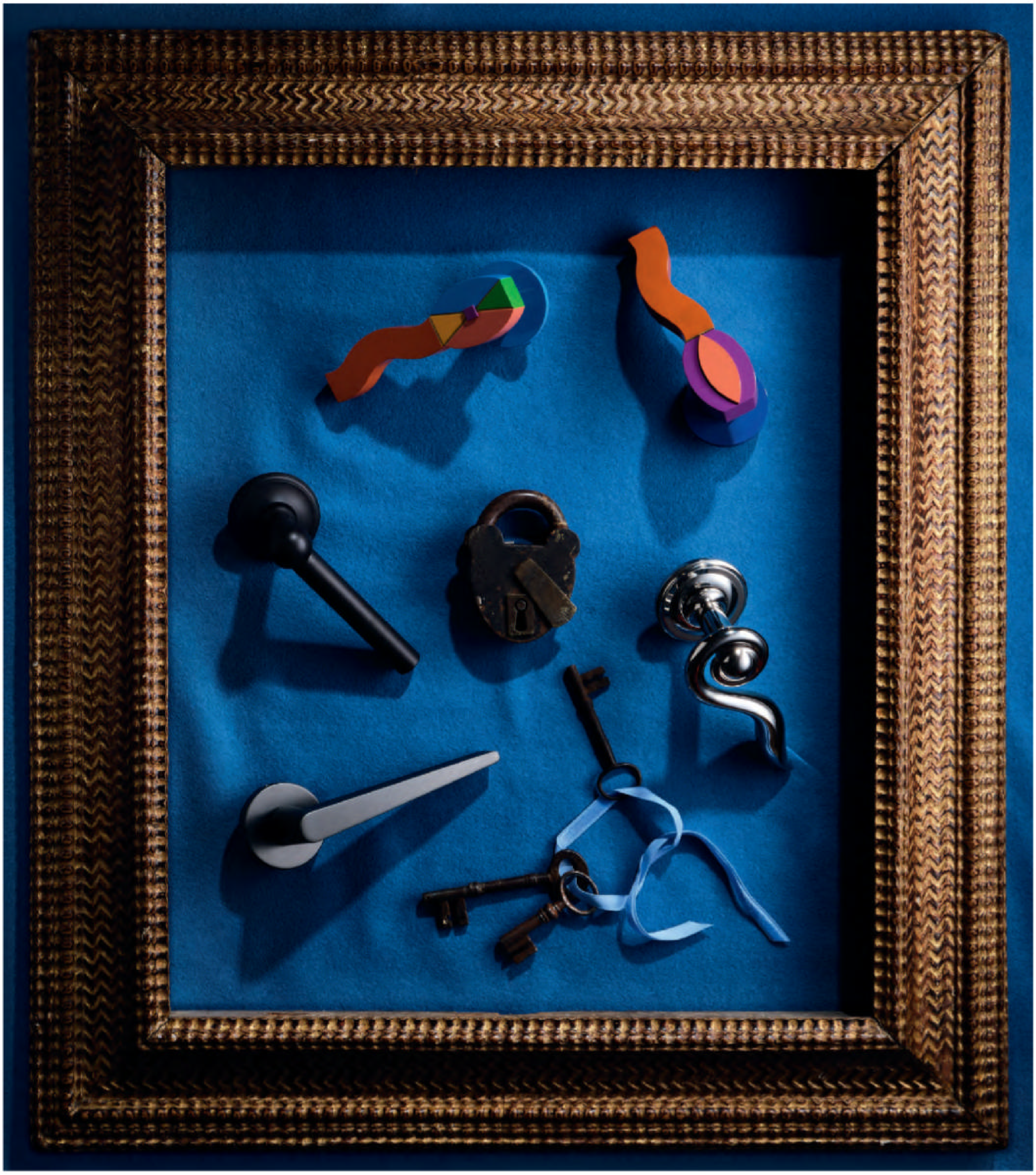


Clockwise from top left: 'No. 1306 Rateau', $1,175, PE Guerin. 'Lepus' wall hook, by Vbrokkr, £420, The Specified. Light antique bronze 'Bamboo', £391, Pemberton & Sons. 'Fermat' joinery pull, by Barbera Design, £288, The Specified. British 17th-century 'Sunderland' frame. Purple broadcloth, £223.20 per m, Hainsworth. All prices include VAT. *For suppliers' details see Address Book*



From top: 'Calvet', by Antoni Gaudí, £2,335 approx, BD Barcelona Design. 'Hand and Ball', from £576, Charles Edwards Heritage. Spanish 17th-century Baroque frame. Moss-green doeskin, £226.80 per m, Hainsworth. All prices include VAT. *For suppliers' details see Address Book*



Clockwise from top: 'YIL01', by Yinka Ilori, £400; 'YIL02', by Yinka Ilori, £400; both Izé. 'LV-2038', £479, SA Baxter. 'Hepworth', £62.99, Dowsing & Reynolds. 'Harper' mortice, £66, Corston Architectural Detail. Dutch 17th-century cabinetmaker's frame. Blue doeskin, £226.80 per m, Hainsworth. Throughout: frames supplied by Paul Mitchell, specialist in the framing of old and modern master paintings and drawings. Keys and locks from the Lacquer Chest. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ❂

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Slider House Rules

Prized (and prised open) the world over, oysters are the most sophisticated and sensual of seafoods. But whether you prefer yours grilled with breadcrumbs, wrapped in bacon or straight from the shell, once you acquire the taste it's quite hard to stop – one swallow, reckons Daisy Garnett, does not a spring, autumn or winter make. Photography: Tessa Traeger

The best oysters I ever ate were in Chiloé, the large Chilean island in northern Patagonia. My pal Lucy and I, both of us 18 years old, ate them one by one straight from the rocks as we splashed around a bay, flirting with local boys. That's all there is to the story and yet it was a transcendent experience: what was it like for a naive northern European teenager who'd grown up eating shepherd's pie to have, all at once, such sensory overload: sun, salt, grit, a whiff of sex, high spirits? Was it the first time every one of my senses was switched on to high beam? I think so. And unlike those other times when you want to bottle and ingest pure pleasure but can't, here it was: all this *pleasure*, delivered in all kinds of ways, but the essential experience of it compressed and bound up, like a perfect little present, in a nugget of silky muscle sitting in a splash of briny Chilean water on its own fit-for-purpose serving vessel. Even the grit tasted good.

Oh oysters. So salty. So sexy. So slippery. So suggestive. So special. So intense. We should eat them more often, surely. In our house, we now do. All it took was one cornerstone purchase a couple of years ago: an oyster-shucking knife. They're inexpensive, and having one in the drawer means that all at once these molluscs can be released from their gilded cages. It's lovely watching an expert in a linen apron shuck half a dozen, then set them down in front of you on a silver platter and a bed of ice, but that's what you're paying for: the labour, the ice, the silver and the space to store it. Fair play, but the down side is too few oysters in our lives.

They are too delicious for that. I'm not saying they should be on your weekly

Top: the harvesting of oysters at Porlock Weir, Somerset, can only be done at very low tide. The molluscs are attached to raised metal beds with elastic bands and the incoming sea covers them completely twice a day. They are then kept in the village in special seawater purification tanks before being dispatched by post to customers. Opposite: a Loch Fyne Pacific oyster nestles on ice with seaweed

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shopping list but, oh my goodness!, coming home with a bag of them from the fishmonger or having them delivered to your door direct from an oyster farm, then shucking them yourself (a YouTube video will show you how) is something we should all do more often. The cost of DIY oysters is not prohibitive, it turns out. I get mine online from Porlock Bay, Somerset, one of only two sites in Britain with Grade A water, and it was at that farm that Tessa shot the images for this story.

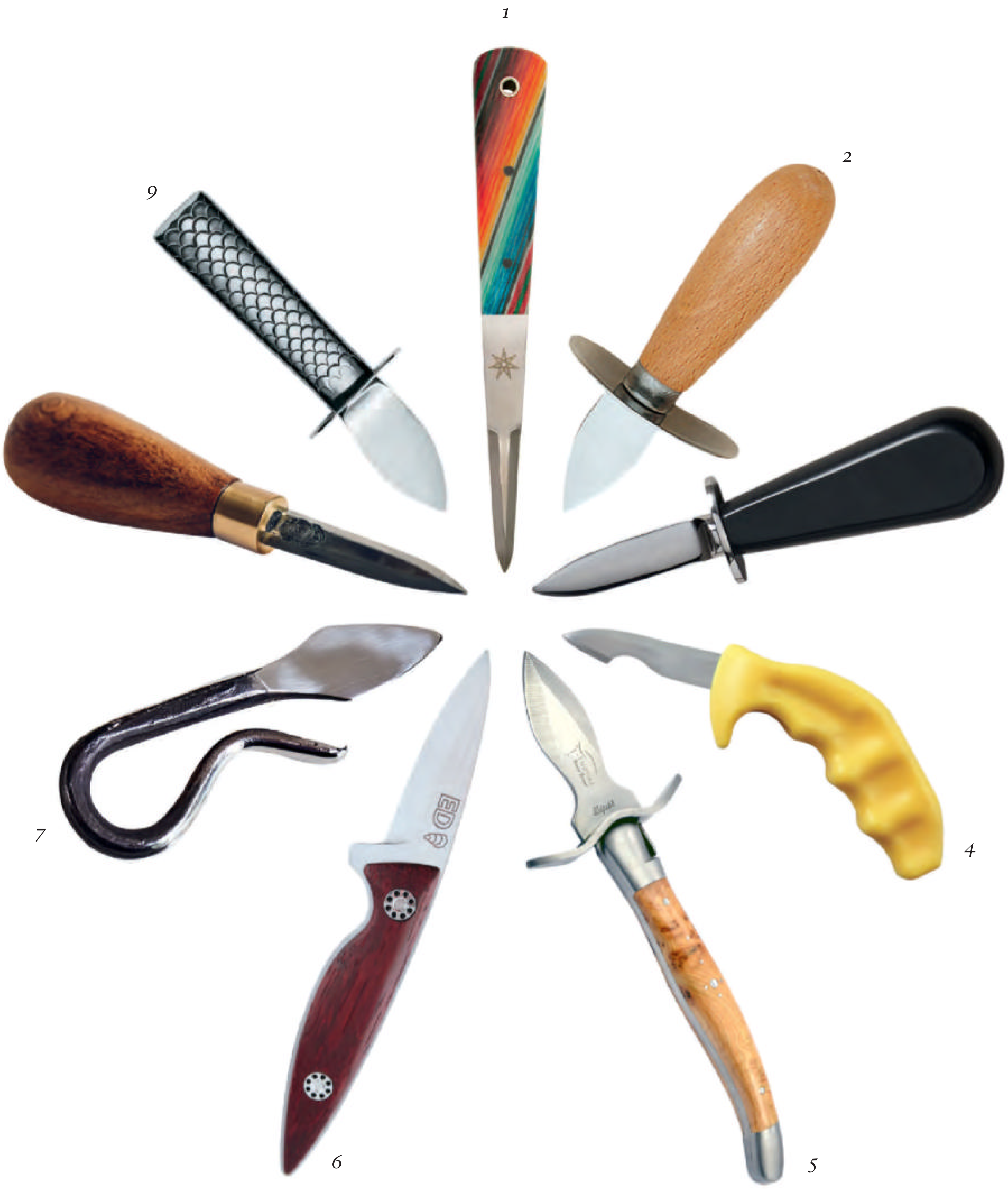
Oysters used to be cheap as chips, literally. Beef-and-oyster pie was born because the bivalves provided extra filling for next to nothing. Can you imagine? They were practically given away. No wonder our native ones were overfished almost to oblivion over the past couple of hundred years. Wouldn't you just help yourself given how delicious and richly efficient a food source they are. The oyster beds at Porlock Bay, for example, were raided in the 1890s by fishermen from Colchester and Whitstable after their own beds began to fail. But even without such a theft, by 1965 you'd have been hard pushed to find a native oyster anywhere in our waters. They'd all been eaten. Awful. But not a tragedy, because that's when the Pacific variety, cultivated in Japan for hundreds of years, was introduced to these shores and found to thrive, all year round.

I like oysters best with a squeeze of lemon or, at a push, a spoonful of mignonette, the French vinaigrette of finely chopped shallots in red wine vinegar. You can bake or grill oysters with butter and breadcrumbs and other diced delicacies that take your fancy (mushrooms, onion, chilli, herbs, bacon even, for extra richness), and they are delectable cooked like that of course, but for me, that's spoiling the fun. The point of an oyster is its rawness; its elemental immediacy, even if you live a long way from the coast: the fact that they taste so potent and that eating them, tipping them out of their shell with your head thrown back at the right angle, feels both grown-up and basic. Oysters are power foods in that eating one makes you feel just that: powerful, zipped up, in charge of life, queen bee, if only for a moment – and at the same time spoiled and looked after. Eating an oyster makes the rest of it feel easy. That's a rare feeling, surely. Don't wait to be served ⊛

Oyster shooters with ginger vodka on a bed of ice make for an innovative alternative to those traditional accompaniments – a flute of champagne or a pint of stout. The old rule of thumb about eating oysters only when there's an 'r' in the month still holds true, at least in the northern hemisphere. In summer, the moreish molluscs are busy spawning, and their flesh becomes offensively soft and milky

Aw, Shucks!

A seaworthy selection of oyster knives just for you?
David Lipton is too kind



1 'Baja', $45, Town Cutler. 2 Oyster knife with varnished handle, £16, Divertimenti. 3 'M8-167-70', £125 approx, Lorenzi Milano. 4 'Paddy Malpeque', by Shucker Paddy, $20, Swissmar. 5 Oyster knife with juniper handle, by Honoré Durand, £119 approx, Laguiole. 6 Oyster knife, by Alexander Bol, £331 approx, Enduris. 7 'Black Banks', $180, Sea Island Forge. 8 Oyster knife, by Jess Taylor and Leechtown Blacksmith, £135 approx, Wandering Mollusk. 9 'Colombina', by Doriana and Massimiliano Fuksas with Alberto Gozzi, £34, Alessi. All prices include VAT. For suppliers' details see Address Book ⊛

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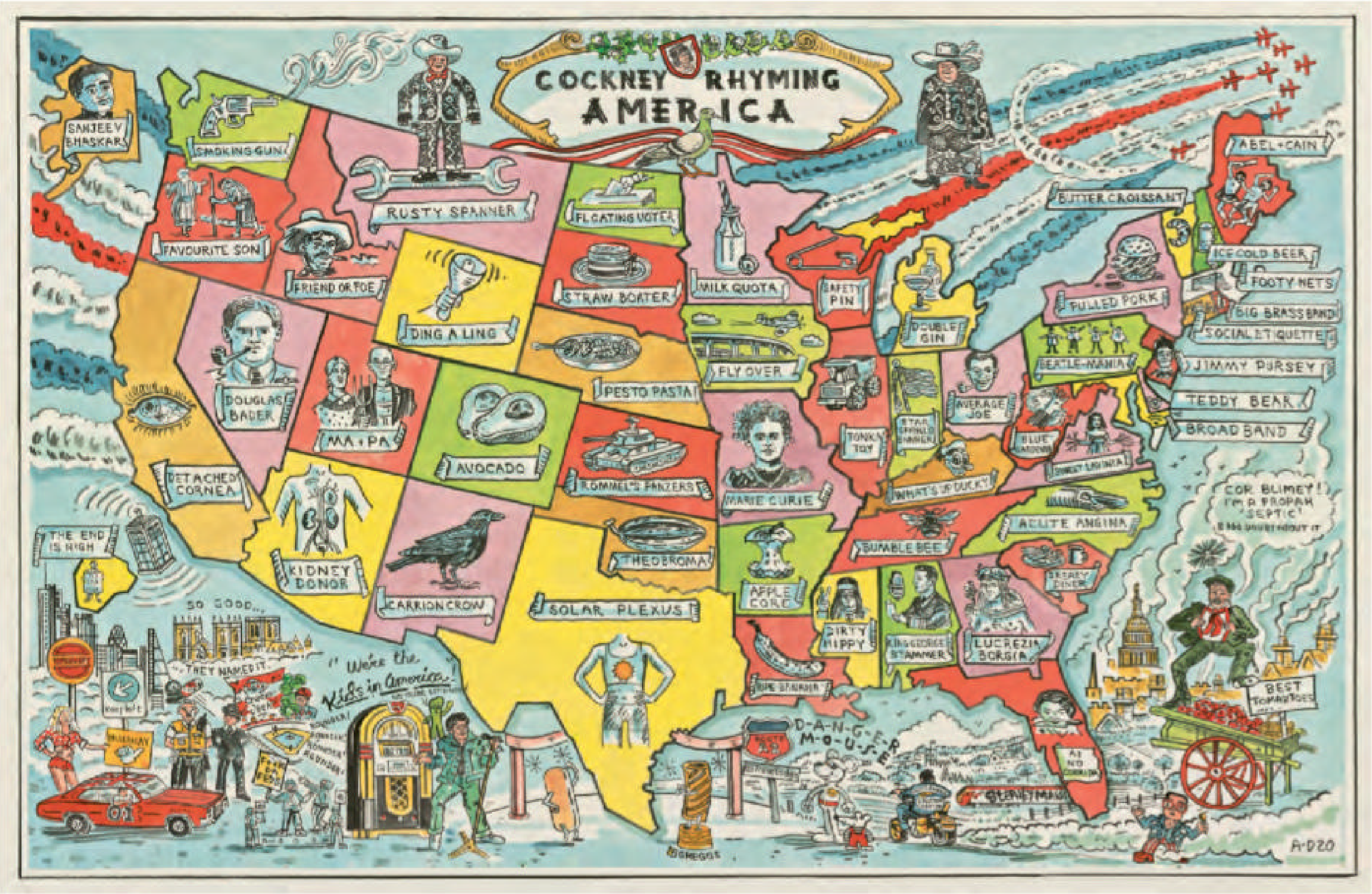
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Adam Dant's Political Maps (by Adam Dant; Batsford, rrp £30)

Adam Dant is not a geographer per se. He is an illustrator who deploys the grammar of cartography to create intricate graphics that are dense with data and frequently whimsical in execution. Not all of these are overtly political – nor, for that matter, are they all really 'maps'; in places the definition is even more stretched than a Gall–Peters projection. But technically a *political map* is simply one conveying information that does not have a physical presence: the most obvious example being national borders, which are rarely visible in the 'real' world. Certainly many of Dant's drawings and engravings are partly political, sometimes even party-political (Brexit is rendered as a Hanna-Barbera race, and *The Passion of JC* depicts a bearded and messianic figure 'crucified by the media elite unbelievers'), but others here are straightforward infographics. Subjects range from 17th-century tulipomania and fictitious beasts of the British Isles to an ersatz system of cockney rhyming slang for American states. (Readers with rhotic accents may disagree, however, that Nevada rhymes with Douglas Bader.)

Dant's maps are also frequently topological, in that shapes and distances are simplified and manipulated for a graphic purpose, as seen in Harry Beck's pioneering 'circuit diagram' Tube map. Meandering Medieval streets become disciplined grids and coastlines abstracted – one map manages both at once, overlaying the voyages of Jason and the Argonauts on to central London. Elsewhere, Dant's map of Jewish Spitalfields contorts the street plan into the shape of a menorah, and Paris fits neatly into the shell of an *escargot*. Cambridge is translated into an image that simultaneously evokes De Chirico's sparse cityscapes and Saul Steinberg's satirical *View of the World from 9th Avenue*; while Oxford is represented by a project that positions the city's unlovely Westgate shopping centre as the *omphalos*, or centre point, of the world, radiating new lines of sociocultural latitude and longitude.

This book's own prime meridian, however, quite clearly runs through London. We are presented with guides to the capital's lost rivers, Civil War defences, unbuilt edifices, iconoclasts, theatres and division bells, as well as one engraving so topological and pared-down that it turns a city of eight million residents into the calligraphic flourish of a Zen monk. Specifically, Dant's *omphalos* is in the East End, centring on his former studio on Shoreditch's Club Row. From its interest in the field of psychogeography to its polyglot, 'nostalgic to the point of retro' range of styles – everything from Hogarth to souvenir postcards is pressed into service – *Adam Dant's Political Maps* is a very Shoreditch sort of a book, steeped in a sense of place and history. But don't throw away your atlas or delete your Google Maps app just yet, for it is primarily a guide to navigation for the mind ⊛

Stephen Patience is a freelance writer

'Cockney Rhyming America' (2020) renames the 50 US states in an approximation of costermongers' argot

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India: A History in Objects (by T. Richard Blurton; Thames & Hudson/British Museum, rrp £30)

It might seem an impossible task to describe and explain the interwoven cultures and histories of the Indian subcontinent in one volume, especially if you are constrained by using (almost) exclusively objects in the British Museum. Fortunately, the BM's Indian holdings are vast and varied, and Richard Blurton has amassed a wealth of knowledge about them from his 30-year career as curator there. The book is an amazing feat of concision, managing to illustrate and discuss around 380 objects, ranging from Palaeolithic hand-axes and Chola bronzes to Mughal paintings, Bengali embroideries and 21st-century Indian art. The other 500-odd images are well-chosen contextual photos of objects in use or relevant sites. Undoubtedly it is the book's visual richness that makes a dramatic first impression, but the accompanying text is engaging and informative. The short-essay format makes the book easy to dip into but also provides satisfying detail both on well-known areas of Indian history (the Ramayana, the Taj Mahal or Company paintings, for example) and other much less familiar ones, like snake deities or devotional textiles from Assam.

Tethered as the book is to the Bloomsbury behemoth's holdings, its success depends on the strengths of the collection. Historically, the BM has concentrated on archaeological material, while the V&A has been the place to go for decorative arts. This means that the book is strongest dealing with the earlier periods, while post-Medieval societies rich in material culture, such as Sri Lanka or Mughal India, receive shorter shrift. One small image to represent all the visual arts under the emperor Jahangir, for example, seems a bit inadequate. But there are a great many dramatic spreads that make up for this kind of inevitable economy – and, after all, one can find plenty of other books that deal exhaustively with Mughal art.

Subjects that might seem dry to the non-specialist, such as early pottery or metalwork, are made enticing through excellent photography, engaging texts and clever layouts: I never thought I'd be persuaded to read about early punch-marked coins, but greatly enjoyed doing so. The same goes for many other subjects that are less well-known than the arts of the later periods. A huge subject such as 'Greeks in India and the trade with the West' is condensed into three beautiful objects: one of these, a late Roman pepper-pot lid in the form of a ram found in a hoard in Suffolk, is used to epitomise the spice trade, which was already flourishing between India and Britain by the third century BCE.

The incredibly wide range of subjects and the fascinating cross-currents they throw up are a delight to discover. Overall, this is a fine book that weaves together many of the strands that make up one of the world's most fascinating cultures ⊛

Rosemary Crill is a former senior curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Sculpture of a Jain 'Tirthankara' (teacher). Mathura, Uttar Pradesh, third century BCE

Continental Self

Tino Zervudachi: Interiors Around the World (by Natasha Fraser; Flammarion, rrp £55)

If first exposure counts, the mise-en-scène of Tino Zervudachi's childhood was surely formative. In his grandparents' apartment in Alexandria were the furnishings of their previous Paris flat, decorated by Maison Jansen; Zervudachi's great-uncle Peter was a renowned antique dealer, latterly in Vevey, Switzerland, whose clients included the Marchesa Casati and Giovanni Agnelli; as a young man, Tino was fortunate in friends including David Hicks, Geoffrey Bennison and Madeleine Castaing. And then there was the lengthy partnership with David Mlinaric, beginning when Tino was 18. Given such diverse and distinguished influences, it is hardly surprising that the designer has described his style as 'Continental'.

Natasha Fraser's smart monograph celebrates a career spanning four decades and a handful of continents. More than 30 featured projects include the designer's own New York pied-à-terre and a beach house in the Bahamas. Both Zervudachi himself, and all those interviewed by the author who have worked alongside him, deny a signature style, praising instead his sensitivity to architectural spaces and wide-ranging enthusiasms. 'A foot in the past and a foot in the present', the assessment of one New York-based associate, does indeed characterise his work. So does the designer's own view of his unBritish outlook: even London-based projects glitter with an overseas polish. All bear out Fraser's verdict that Zervudachi's stock-in-trade comprises 'carefully crafted, architecturally thoughtful interiors'.

For a man whose career began in the 1980s, Zervudachi has consistently embraced both an approach and an aesthetic far removed from the swags-and-tails excesses of that cushion-filled, frilly decade. From Mlinaric, he learned the importance of getting right the architectural bones of a given space; he learned too to incorporate within a scheme features tailored to a client's particular way of life. Yet the Zervudachi idiom, honed and continually evolving, extends beyond bespoke functionalism. All the interiors featured here suggest sumptuous sleekness; in all is a prevailing orderliness, the reassurance of a not-too-manicured perfection.

Zervudachi excels at harmonious juxtapositions: a painted Louis XVI chair stationed below a zingy gouache by Alexander Calder, its swirling snail shell of thick black outlines a reflection of the concave chair back; a simple wooden figure from Indonesia on a marble-topped giltwood table, the slope of the figure's shoulders reflected in the curve of cabriole legs, polished stone a foil to the matt wood. Bespoke fabrics and modern black-and-white photography recur. Zervudachi's decorating is tactile and points to informed connoisseurship. If, as is sometimes claimed for interior design, it is witty, its wit is of a rarefied variety.

By contrast, Fraser's text eschews jeux d'esprit. This is a deeply admiring, occasionally portentous response to Zervudachi's sophisticated portfolio. Overwhelmingly her focus is on the design process as much as its outcome; absent is any idea of the impact on their occupants of these highly sensual schemes, or any exploration of what it is like to find oneself in a Zervudachi room, house, yacht or château. Perhaps this scarcely matters: many of these photographs speak for themselves, prompts for dreaming ⊛

Matthew Dennison is the author of 'Teller of the Unexpected: The Life of Roald Dahl, An Unofficial Biography' (Apollo)

A spectacular double-height room in a mountain guest chalet in the Alps. A TV*-watching gallery can be glimpsed at upper right*

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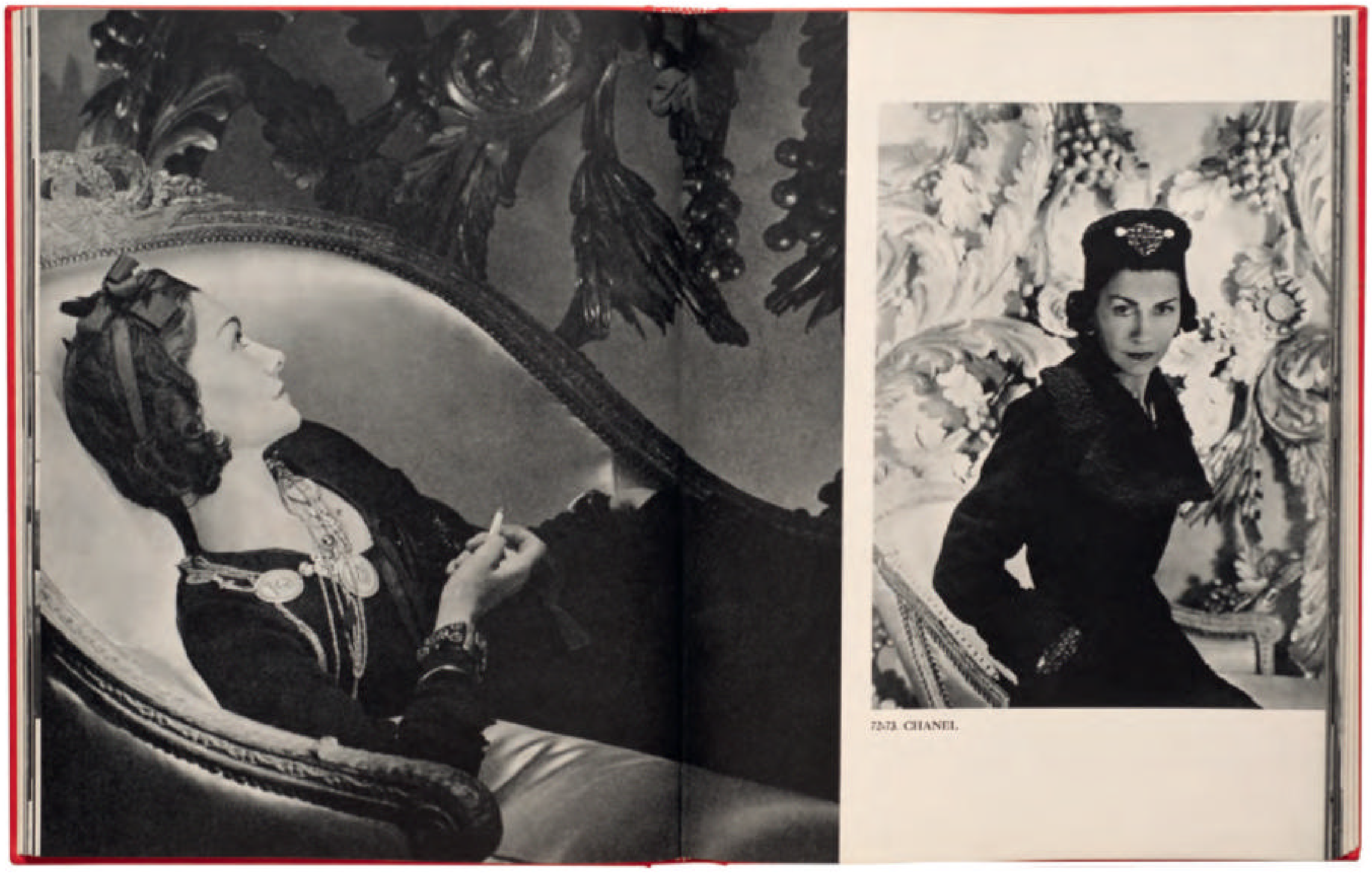
A Clamour for Glamour

With the Depression looming large, it's no surprise that people sought solace in the pearl-lined embrace of the beau monde. Ask and you shall receive: and none answered the call for fantasy and fame quite like Horst. Leafing through his *Salute to the Thirties* (1971) – a collection of the photographer's portraits of a star-studded decade – Mitchell Owens raises his coupe to a legendary lensman



For days before the shoot, Horst discussed with Coco Chanel 'the mood we wanted to create'. The reclining image was her ultimate choice

'We didn't need dialogue; we had faces!' So snapped Norma Desmond, the dangerously loopy protagonist of Billy Wilder's 1950 movie *Sunset Boulevard*, a former silent-film star spitting her disdain for talking pictures. A decade after the heyday of the fictional Desmond, brilliantly portrayed by the great Gloria Swanson, faces were still what Hollywood delivered, and many of them – along with iconic talents of the time in various fields – grace *Salute to the Thirties* (Viking Press, 1971), the creation of yet another riveting contemporary countenance.

Best known by the guttural mononym Horst, and later still as Horst P. Horst, the honey-blond German hunk Horst Bohrmann had pursued a career in architecture – studying with László Moholy-Nagy at the Weimar Bauhaus and serving as Le Corbusier's apprentice in Paris – but gave it up for photography when he was 24. Promoted by his fashion-lensman lover, the Baltic nobleman George Hoyningen-Huene, he was a star within two years, thanks to a keen eye for felicitous compositions and, as a reviewer of *Salute to the Thirties* would later observe, 'the knack of photographing people so that they don't look as if they were being photographed at all'. In this age of smartphones and filter apps, it is impossible for many people to imagine the challenges that bedevilled Horst and others, relying on unwieldy 8 × 10 cameras and extensive retouching, as they plied their craft. As the photographer explains in the book's introduction: 'When one took a portrait photograph, one had to make anything between 2-second and 10-second exposures – during which even the loveliest smile could freeze and the lithest figure turn to stone.'

Challenges aside, including the lack of exposure meters, which had been invented by this point but were not in general use, the subjects of *Salute to the Thirties* – representatives of what Horst called 'the astonishing vitality, in literature, art, music, ballet, theatre, opera, films, fashion, and private entertainment' – look natural but, at the same time, celestial. Coco

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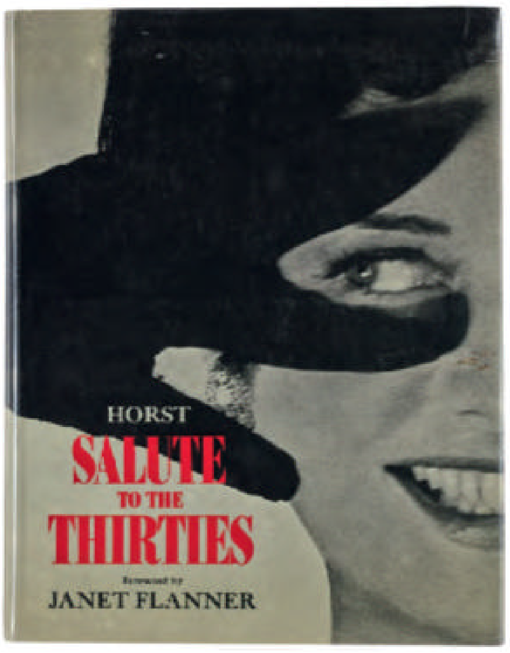

Chanel, laden with golden chains and medallions, reclines into the curved back of a satin-dressed Louis XVI *duchesse brisée*, her face in sharp profile beneath a jaunty bow, cigarette smouldering in languid hand. Entertainer Josephine Baker, her expression pensive, stands naked but for a fall of silk and ropes of pearls, while the French chanteuse Mistinguett, dripping feathers, cheekily bites the petal of an arum lily. On and on, international personalities of the Depression decade parade past in softly textured photogravures: stage designer Bébé Bérard (*WoI* Sept 2022); decorator Jean-Michel Frank; actresses Tallulah Bankhead, Ginger Rogers and Katharine Hepburn; writer Gertrude Stein; socialite Babe Mortimer (later Babe Paley); artist Salvador Dalí; the Duchess of Windsor; and more. The effervescent movie star and avaricious jewellery collector Paulette Goddard gets the cover, an ecstatic image of the beaming beauty peeking through a starfish-splayed hand clad in a dark glove.

Seminal Hoyningen-Huene portraits appear in *Salute to the Thirties* too, Horst's gracious tribute to his former inamorato and mentor, who had died in obscurity a couple of years before, leaving the slightly younger man all his photographs, negatives and contact sheets. The book is indeed a bit of a family affair. Valentine Lawford, a British diplomat turned writer and Horst's romantic partner since 1938, wrote the 192-page book's voluminous endnotes about the subjects, while long-time friend Janet Flanner, Paris correspondent of the *New Yorker* and a Horst subject herself, provided the atmospheric foreword. She had met the photographer at the birth of his career and had reviewed his first publicly exhibited works, in 1932 at La Plume d'Or bookshop, praising 'the special constructive values of one who has worked first with skeletons of steel and wood' and calling out his genius for 'linear romance'. With *Salute to the Thirties* as enduring proof, her words still ring true ⊛

Actress Paulette Goddard stars on the cover of photographer Horst's 1971 classic. A reviewer called it 'an interesting trip down the River of Nostalgia'

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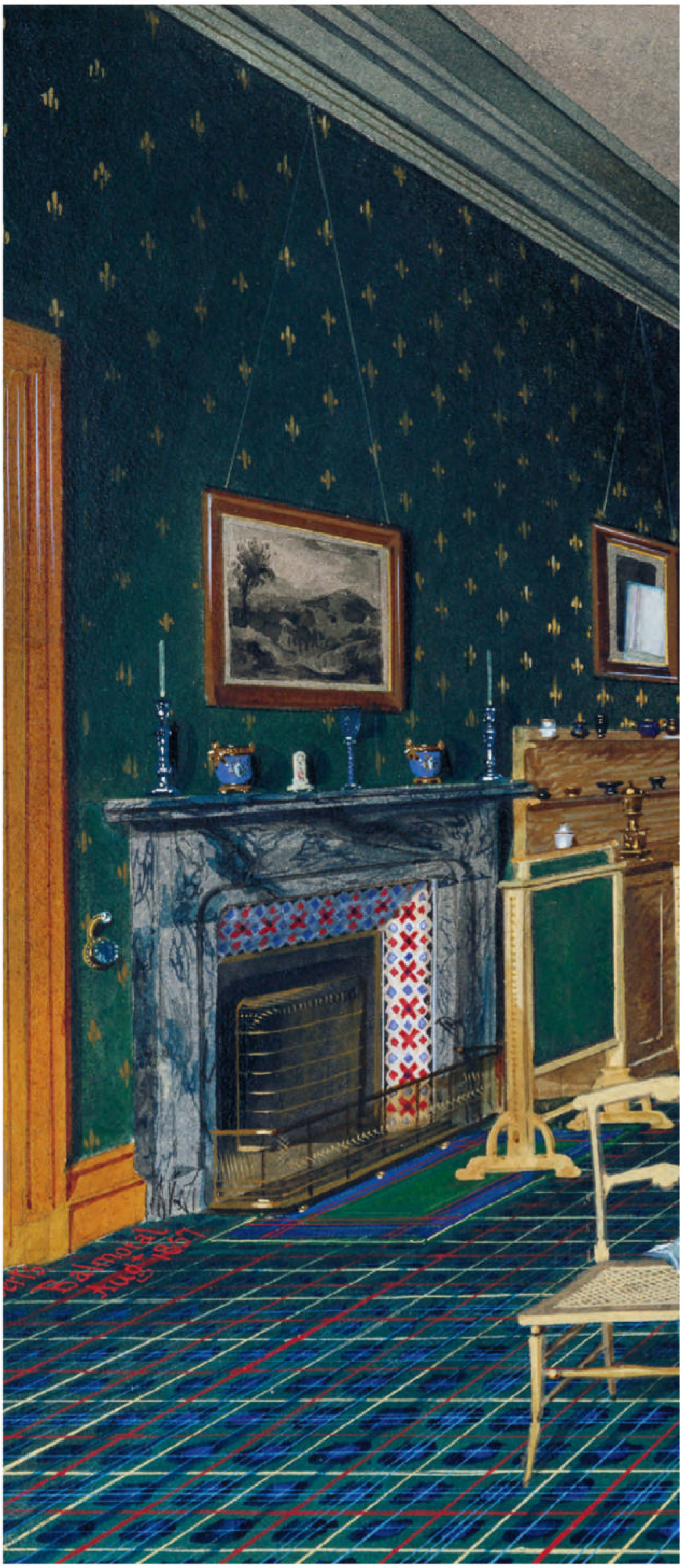
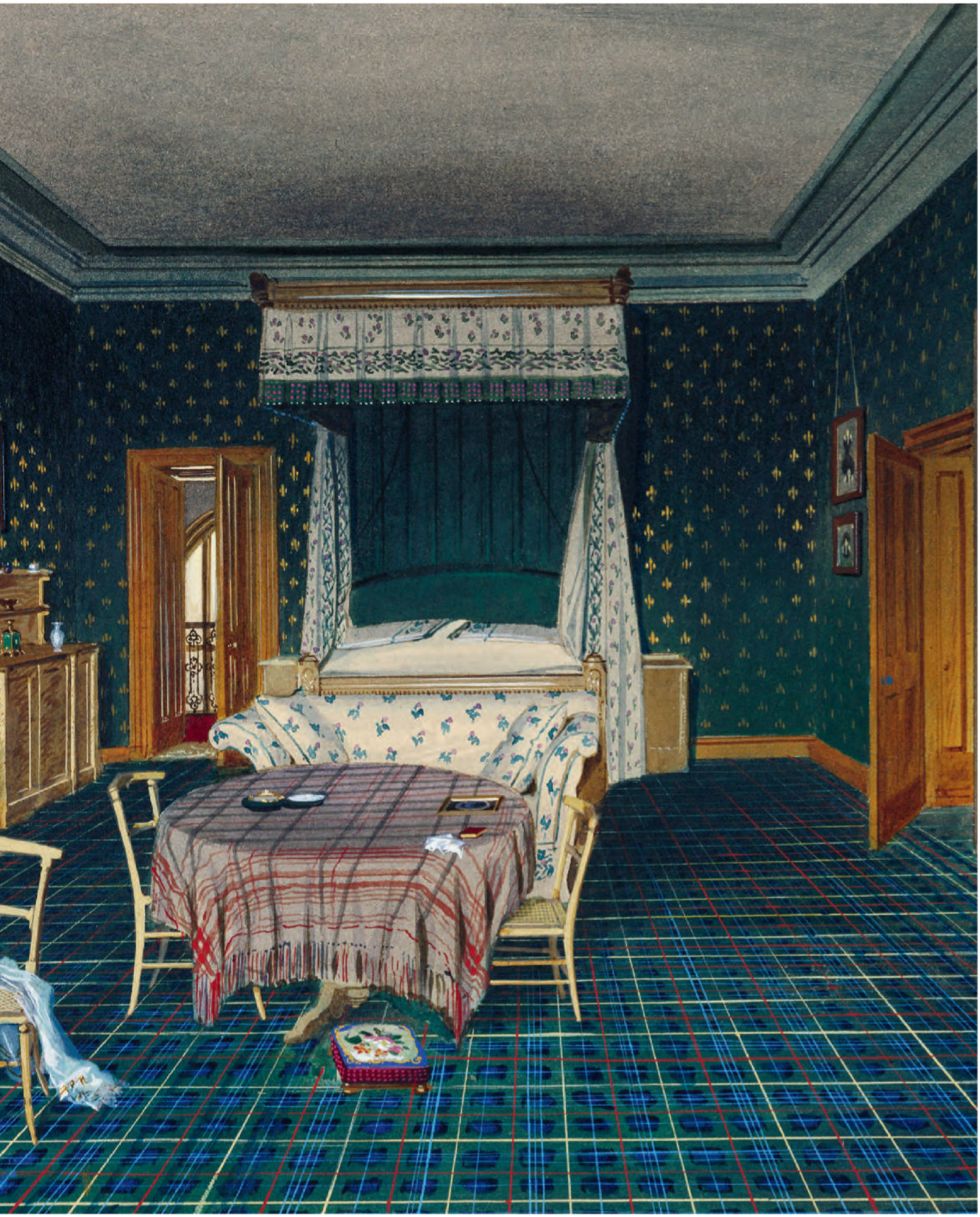
Criss-cross Pollination

Once a potent, and vilified, symbol of the Jacobite rebellion, tartan has travelled far beyond its Scottish roots. Queen Victoria used the motifs to mask her Prussian family links, Vivienne Westwood deployed it in a show of punkish defiance and others have explored the gender-fluid possibilities of the kilt. With a new show opening in spring, Robin Muir asks whether any other cloth has ever inspired so many different clans





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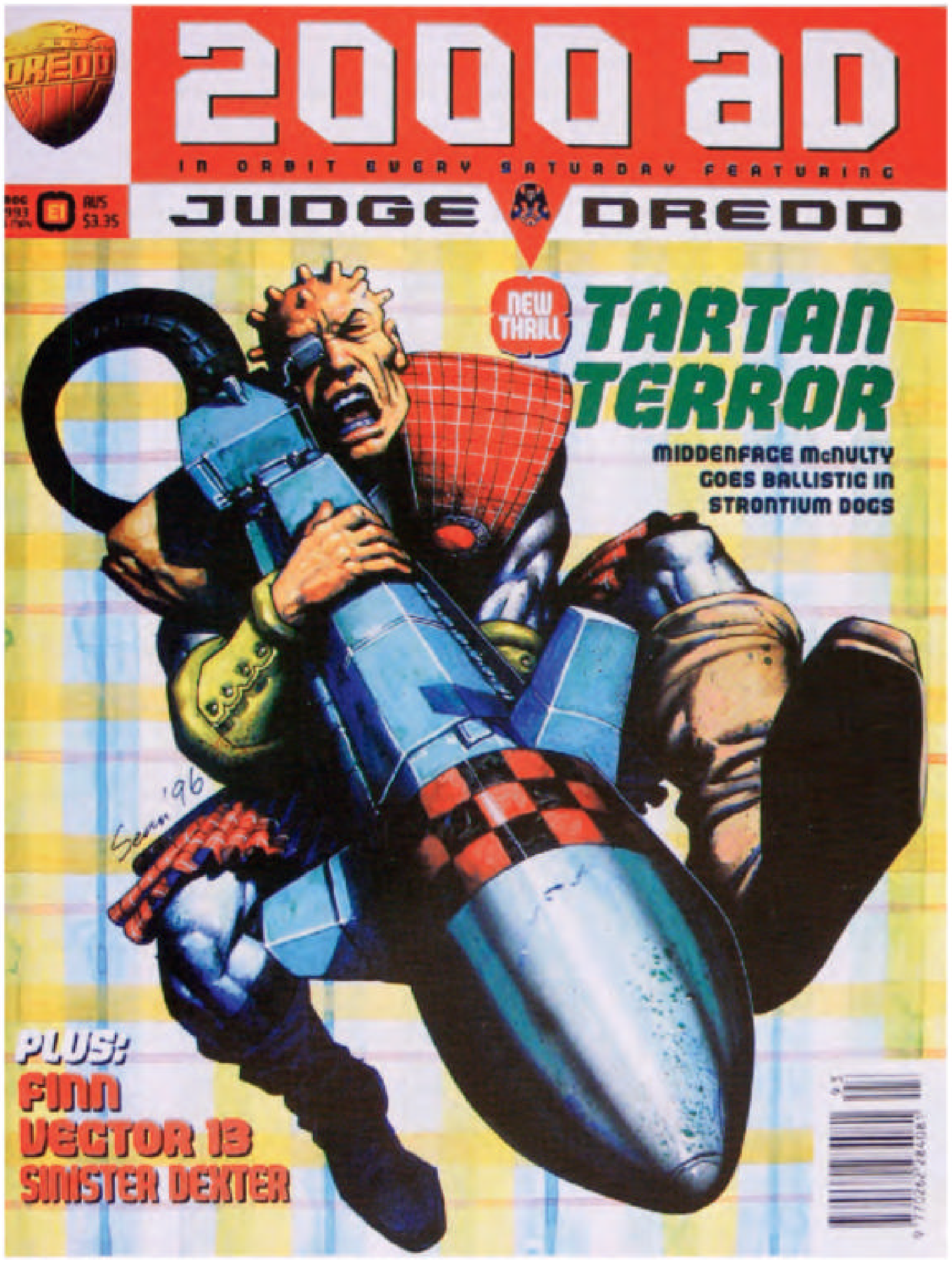

‘To recommend a Scottish holiday to most foreigners would be like recommending a skiing holiday to a man with no legs,’ *Vogue* admonished its readers in 1964. ‘Scotland,’ it continued, ‘thank God, is not for everyone.’ No offence was intended to its farthest-flung mainland audience; rather, while outsiders may journey north to enjoy its snow-capped mountains and purple-swathed glens, to appreciate the nation entirely, you must fully give yourself over to her. For Scotland has remained, even to – *especially* to – its closest neighbour, as unknowable as any foreign country. Galgacus, great chieftain of Caledonia and history’s first bona fide Scotsman, put it rousingly (before being roundly thrashed by Agricola’s Roman armies): ‘We are the last people on earth, protected by our remoteness in a land known only to rumour.’

So above and beyond Hadrian’s Wall, they have always done things differently – and proudly, and rebelliously, and insolently, and usually wrapped up against the elements since time immemorial (or at least the 3rd century AD as fragments indicate) in a brightly hued, cross-hatched, twill-woven textile.

Tartan, at once identifiable with this proudly independent nation, is the subject of a landmark exhibition opening next month at V&A Dundee, the English museum’s outpost across the border. *Tartan*’s starting point is Jonathan Faiers’s magisterial book of the same name, first published in 2008. Professor Faiers is also a consultant curator for the exhibition, and has updated it to draw out several strands that make the exhibition as much about the ‘now’ as the ‘then’. One phenomenon, perhaps unforeseeable 15 years ago, concerns the expanding – and dismantling – of received notions of masculinity by those designers who readily use the cloth and those who choose to wear it. And it seems entirely appropriate, considering the kilt’s unisex heritage (for without a sporran it is surely a check skirt), that tartan is so highly prized by those for whom gender identification is indefinable. As Faiers puts it: ‘Tartan’s irresistible geometries […] transform its wearers into a set of possibilities.’

But history is inevitable and the history of tartan is inevitably colourful; transgression and rebellion are woven into its warp and weft, a potent symbol of a restless nation. And over the ages the tartan hordes have been unstoppable: the skirling bagpipes of the Scottish regiments at Waterloo; football’s ‘Tartan Army’ on the road to Wemb-er-lee;

Previous pages: Queen Victoria’s bedroom at Balmoral in an 1857 watercolour by James Roberts. Tartan enabled the Prussian Hanoverians to rebrand as Highland chieftains. This page: Sean Phillips’s cover artwork, ‘2000 AD’, ‘Tartan Terror’, May 1996

PREVIOUS PAGES: ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST © HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III 2023
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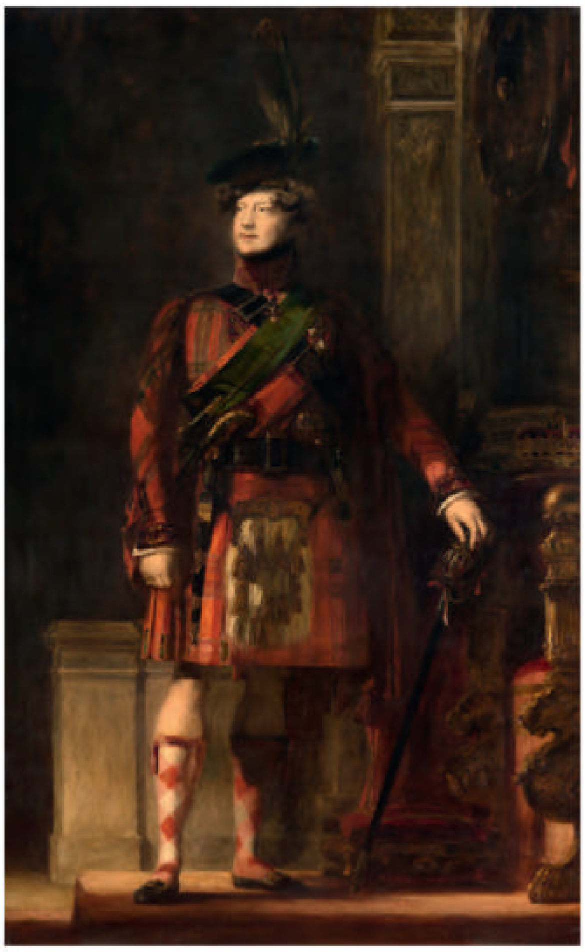
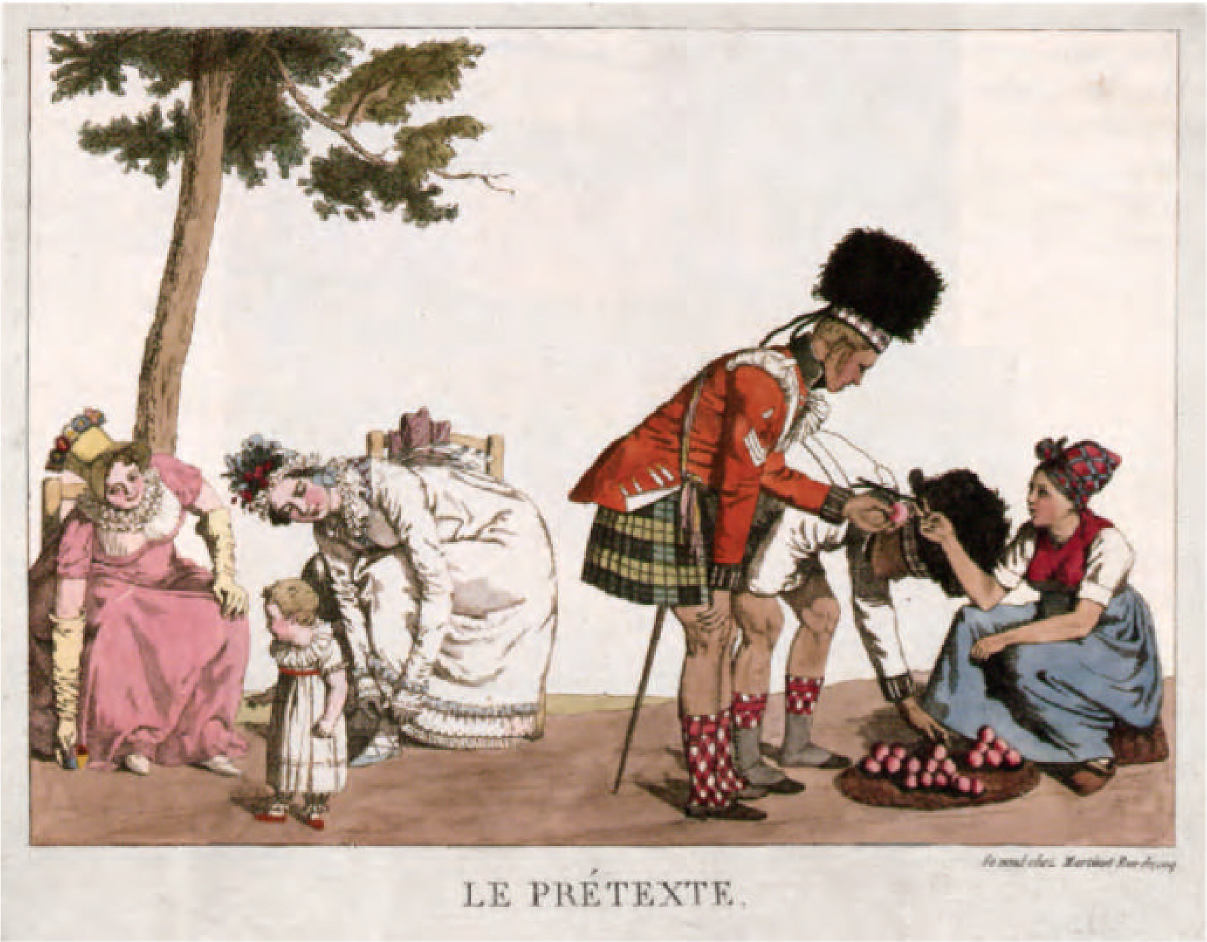



LE PRÉTEXTE.

the scarf-waving teenage ecstasy encircling the Bay City Rollers; the Highland clans rallying around the Jacobite standard; 'tartan toffs' taking their cue from the royal Hanoverian dress-up box.

Of course, Scotland has already had a Charles III, albeit an impotent and non-coronated one, whose 'reign' was spent in exile in Rome. We know him best as Charles Edward Stuart, 'Bonnie Prince Charlie', 'Young Pretender' to the throne of Britain. The glorious and wretched story of the Jacobite uprising ends in 1788 with his death in Rome, a decidedly unbonnie wife-and-consort-beating alcoholic. Contemporary portraits, however, have him honed to perfection in a tight-fitting coat and tighter-fitting breeches, his tartan a flashy harlequin-type chequerboard. Closely related to the multicoloured excess of the Argyle pattern (much beloved of today's professional golfers), it renders him to our eye, perhaps, more a figure of music-hall comedy than a stylish rallying point for disaffected clansmen.

After the Jacobite cause became a lost one, tartan as part of traditional dress was outlawed, becoming a handy cipher for English disparagement of the Scots in general and the lawless Highlander in particular. But such proscription was unsuccessful and the pattern became fashionable with those in positions of power and influence who could choose to rise above a barely enforceable law.

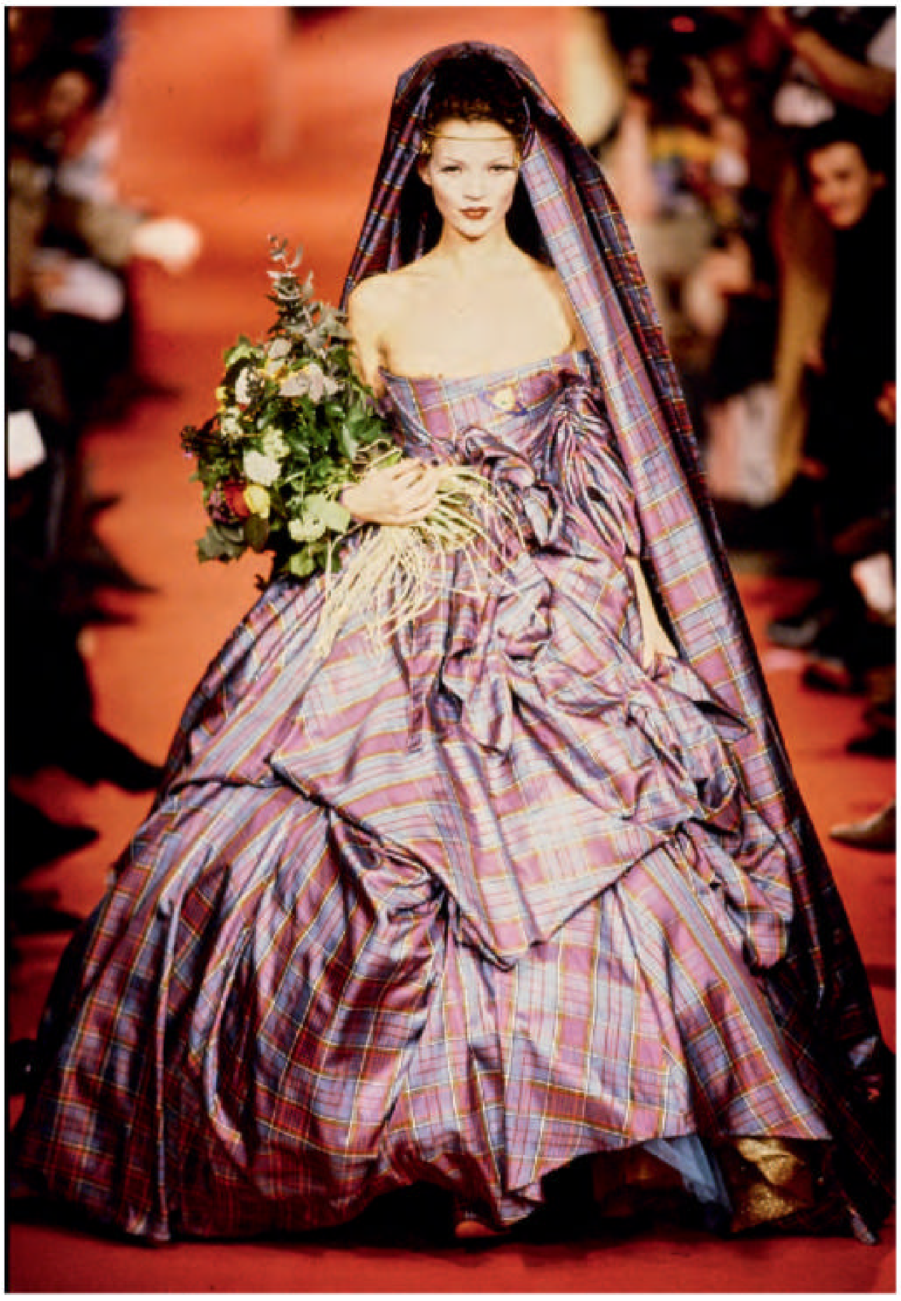
But nothing heralded the textile's revival as much as the swaggering appearance of George IV on his state visit to Edinburgh in 1822. A cavalcade of garishness followed in his generous wake, stage-managed by Sir Walter Scott to cement the latest Hanoverian as unifier-in-chief of Great Britain. According to one contemporary account – from his Edinburgh outfitter – 'Sixty-one yards of royal satin plaid and 31 yards of royal plaid velvet' as well as 'three black Morocco belts' and 'a pair of fine gold shoe rosettes studded all over with variegated gems' formed part of his ceremonial costume. If the king's appearance was high Jacobite Catholic, his dynastic inclinations remained soundly Protestant. Larded with Highland symbolism, chiefly tartan, the bloated king, who could barely walk unaided, made a great success of his visit. Faiers tells us that this '20-day-long fiction [...] can be regarded as tartan's defining moment of transition from Highland habit into fashionable fabric'.

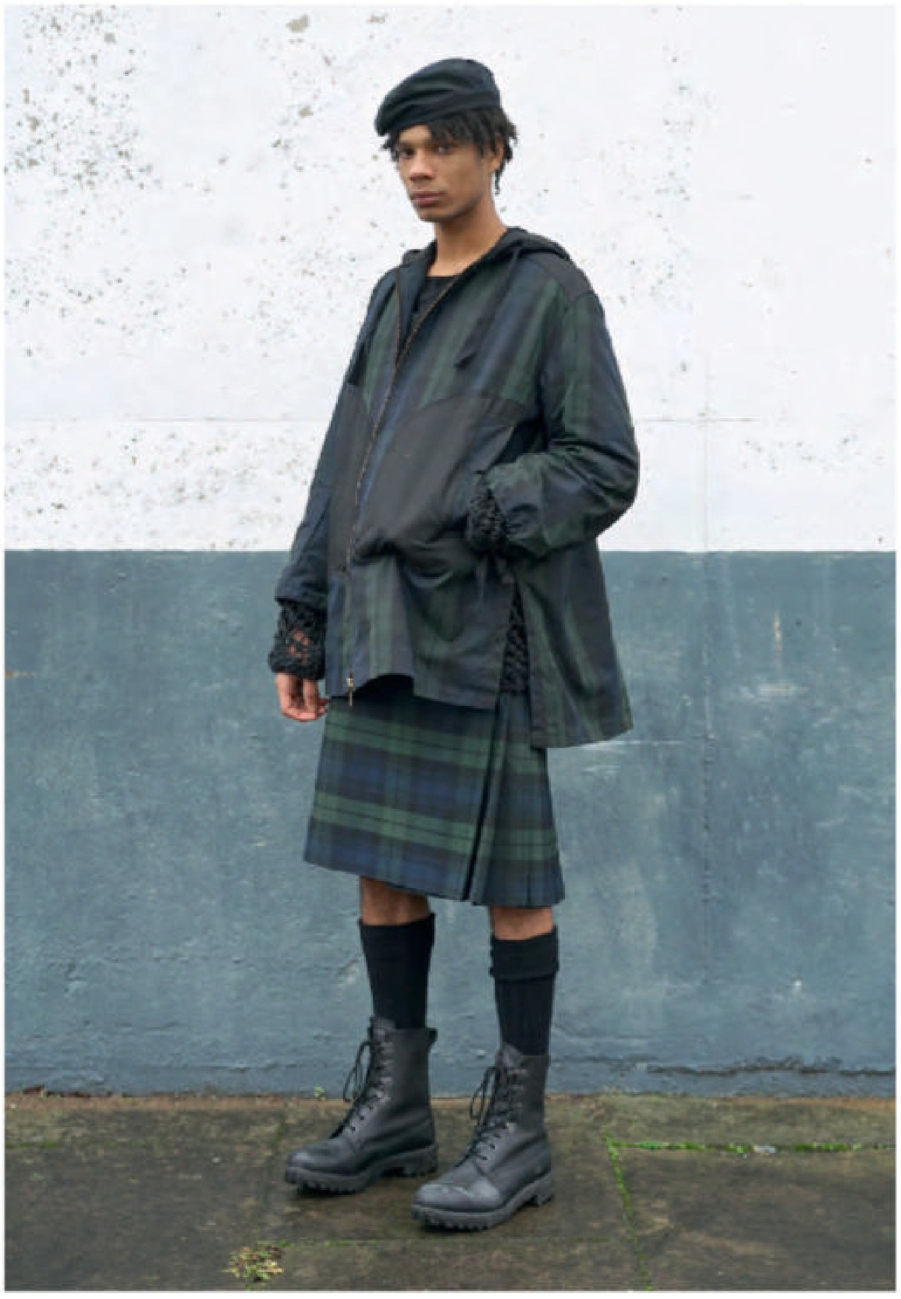
And endorsed further by the imprimatur of Queen Victoria, who styled herself when travelling incognito – if that were truly possible – as the 'Countess of Balmoral'. Despite her penchant for preservation, it is unclear whether she approved the safekeeping of her much-loved Highland servant John Brown's underpants – currently part of the Scottish Tartans Museum at Keith, and a distinctly *un*-haute couture addition to the V&A exhibition.

Tartan never looked back. It is ubiquitous in art and design, in product and interior decoration, in theatre and film and performance arts, architecture, popular culture and, most conspicuously perhaps, in fashion. 'Tartan. Done right there is something special about it,' observed the Scottish writer Robin Douglas-Home, 'something that indefinably heartens the spirit by making you feel part of a large family.' Done wrong it's an end-of-the-pier joke. Caricaturists wondered what George IV might have worn beneath his kilt, starting a line of enquiry that never

Top left: Sir David Wilkie's c1830 oil painting of George IV. Top right: in an etching of 1815, one Parisian woman ties up shoelaces and another picks up a child's ball so as to engineer a glimpse up the kilts of two regimental soldiers, victorious after the Battle of Waterloo

TOP LEFT: GEORGE IV PORTRAIT ON DISPLAY AT THE PALACE OF HOLYROODHOUSE, EDINBURGH. ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST © HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III 2023
TOP RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH © THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM





appears to pall – though it has been in some way answered, perhaps, by John Brown's underpants.

Elsa Schiaparelli once lined herself and her salon top to bottom in swathes of plaid. Closer to our times, Marc Jacobs in New York responded to tartan's heritage to great effect; the fabric was reborn to lend his autumn/winter 2004 collection for Louis Vuitton a frisson of raunchiness. Faiers calls it, admiringly, 'erotic frumpery': the clothes one might imagine 'Miss Jean Brodie wearing if she gave up teaching to work in a Berlin brothel'.

But it fell to two now late British designers to unleash tartan's full transgressive potential. Vivienne Westwood helped it reclaim its unruly, recalcitrant spirit, restoring its position as 'the cloth of dissent' as official supplier to the punk movement. Her tartan-patterned, fetishistic designs – her bondage trousers and zipped-up-and-down straitjackets were easily reproduced on a budget – delivered to a generation of disaffected youth membership of a 'clan' of sorts. So popular, indeed, was Westwood's plaid inventory that she contributed to the revival of the tartan manufacturing industry, which was by then a little in decline.

For Alexander McQueen, who reclaimed his own family's tartan, his fifth presentation in 1995 was something of a turning point. His 'Highland Rape' collection, suffused with these patterns, saw his models drag themselves down the catwalk in various imagined states of violation. Its theme was broader than it immediately appeared. This was not to do with violence meted out to individuals – McQueen became sick of defending himself from charges of misogyny – but the rape of his ancestral homeland by successive generations of English landholders, a stone-cold reaction to the romanticisation of Scotland by his fellow designers. He would turn again to the theme some ten years later, albeit with a less visceral eye, for the 'Widows of Culloden', one of his most highly regarded collections.

In an essay of 1961, Neal Ascherson lamented an uneasy sensation felt by many near and far: that Scotland's glories and landmarks were 'stagey, unrelated props left by a departed company'. Nearly 65 years on, V&A Dundee's display, its first self-initiated show since opening in 2018, and in Scotland's largest museum exhibition space, may surprise the great Scottish writer yet. Game, sett and match ◆

'Tartan' runs at V&A Dundee, 1 Riverside Esplanade, Dundee DD1 4EZ, from 1 April. For opening times, visit vam.ac.uk

Top left: Kate Moss appearing on the catwalk for Vivienne Westwood's 'Anglomania' collection, autumn/winter 1993–1994. The fashion designer invented her own tartan, called MacAndreas. Top right: Nicholas Daley's 'Blackwatch' collection, autumn/winter 2017

TOP LEFT: PHOTO: GUY MARINEAU, COURTESY CONDÉ NAST. TOP RIGHT: PHOTO: NICHOLAS DALEY

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Noa Chernichovsky, *Banana Tree 1*, 2022, ceramic sculpture, H72 × W50 × D50cm, represented at Collect by Charles Burnand Gallery

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One of the most famous paintings in the world, she is instantly recognisable. But it was not always so. When Johannes Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* arrived at the Mauritshuis in 1902, it was neither well known nor highly valued. Painted c1665, the work had languished in obscurity for over 200 years. When she came up at auction in 1881, she sold for just two guilders and 30 cents – about £25 today. It was only gradually over the course of the 20th century that that face began to work its magic, ultimately elevating a once-forgotten artist to the front rank of the old masters. Now, as the Rijksmuseum gathers the largest number of Vermeers ever to be seen in one place, with unprecedented loans from across the world, *Girl with a Pearl Earring* promises to be the centrepiece of the most important art show of 2023.

Like other works that grab us and will not let go, *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is enigmatic. It draws the viewer in by inviting questions. That glance is familiar in a double sense: the look that we now know so well seems to know us. As in several of his other paintings – whose closely peopled interiors invite the viewer into the sitters' private spaces – Vermeer creates the impression that we have interrupted an intimate moment. Here especially, by doing so, we become part of the painting. We have said something to make this girl turn round and look at us this way.

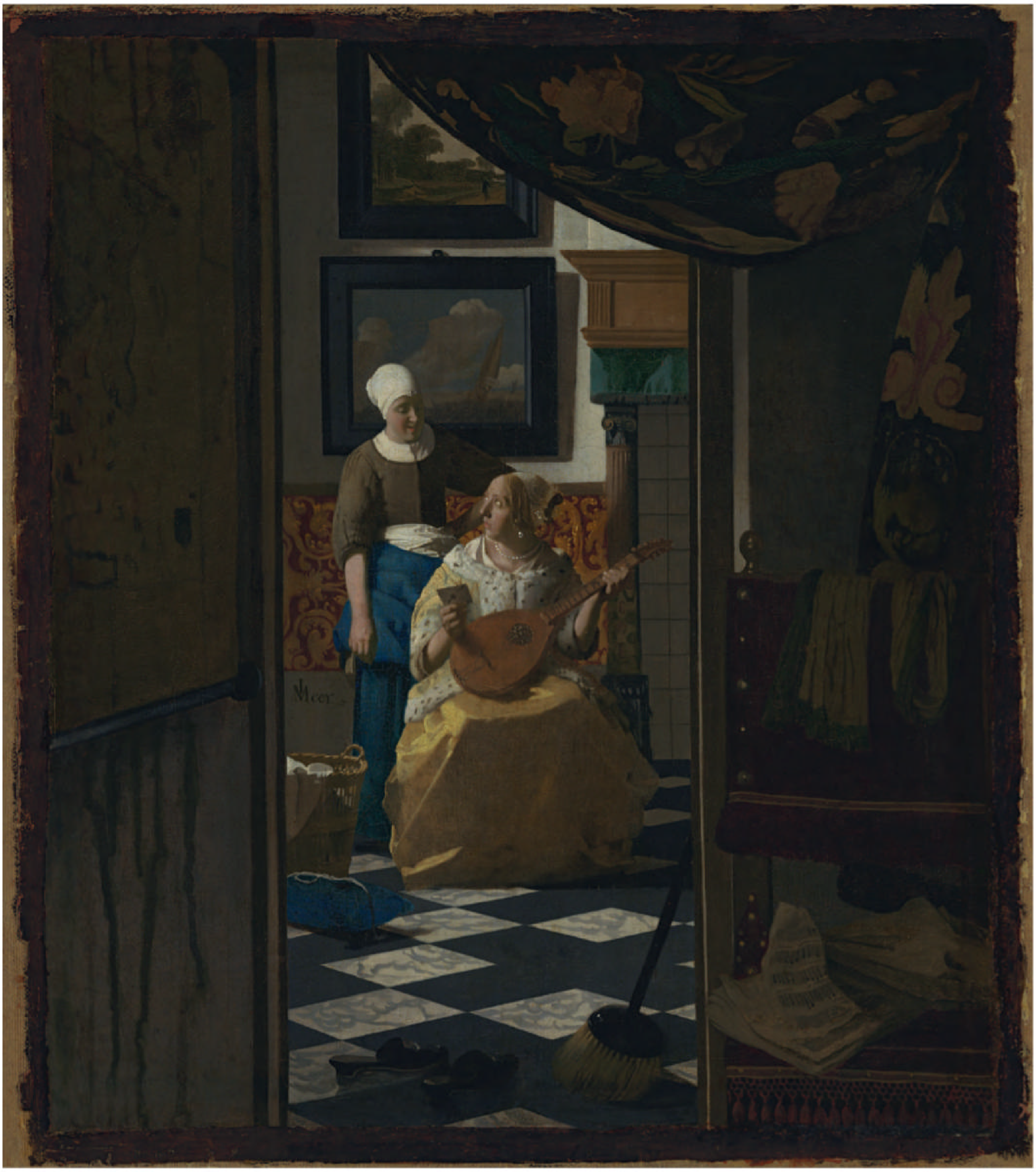
Naturalistic as it seems, it is brilliantly artificial. The light – Vermeer's speciality – is a fine-tuned device. On the cheek and headscarf, it is a caress, giving form to skin and silk against the darkness; on the eyes, collar and pearl, it is a spotlight sharply focused. On her lower lip, half smiling, parted, it does something different again: a soft blur of sensual attention. We stand there desperate to know the story that has brought us here.

That is the point. This is not a portrait of an identifiable sitter, but something more whimsical. It is a tronie: a face painted to appeal to buyers for its own sake. Popular in an age of art created to be sold on the open market, tronies were a speciality of 17th-century Dutch painters. Beauty was not generally the point. Most were humorous: a parade of the aged, drunk and deformed; grotesque and dressed to match. Faces with tales to tell.

Unlike other tronies, Vermeer's girl is, first and foremost, beautiful. But she is no less a costumed character. Her gold-blue headscarf is a stagey dash of Eastern exoticism; the pearl, too large to be real, is probably polished tin or glass. Just like the lute-playing mistress in *The Love Letter*, interrogating her maid with missive in hand, she is designed to set the viewer's imagination spinning fictions.

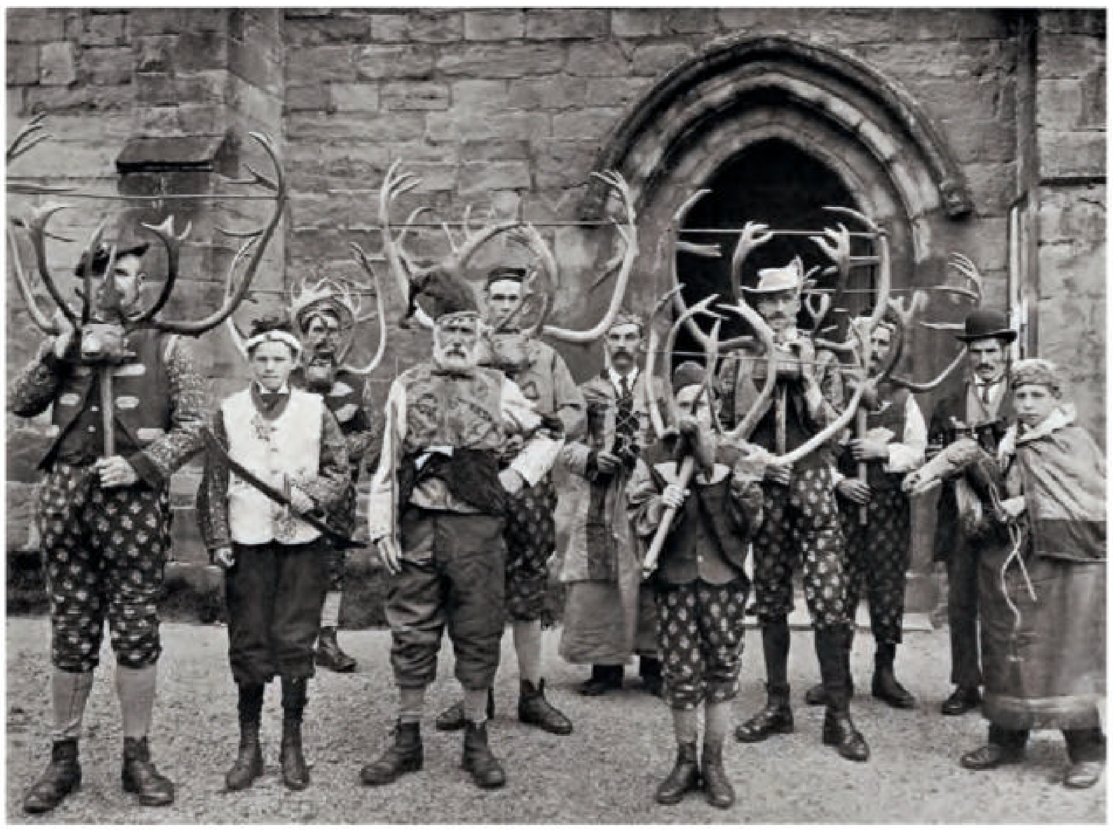
Vermeer, by contrast, had to live in the real world. For a time, it treated him well. Born in 1632 in Delft, he flourished until he was 40. Despite finishing only two or three paintings a year (of which 34 survive), he lived handsomely off his work and was admired by peers – who twice elected him head of the painters' guild. He married, fathered 15 children, of whom 11 survived, and prospered. Professionally, he specialised in peaceful moments of a kind that would eventually be taken from him.

The 28 paintings that will travel to the Rijksmuseum this year are fragments of a life cut short by brutish reality. In 1672 – the Year of Disaster – the Dutch Republic was attacked simultaneously by the French, the English and two German bishoprics. Amid general catastrophe, the art market collapsed. In December 1675, Vermeer died, crippled with debt, driven to madness, according to his wife, by the thought of being unable to support his family. Unfortunately, golden light and polished tin had no power beyond the edge of the canvas. At least not until three centuries later ⊛ *Tim Smith-Laing is a writer and critic*



'The Love Letter', c1669-70, oil on canvas, 44 × 38.5cm

A Harvest of Festivals



Making Mischief: Folk Costume in Britain
11 February–11 June
Compton Verney art gallery, Compton Verney, Warks CV35 9HZ

In January 1882, in the Cambridgeshire town of Whittlesea, a bear was spotted on the streets. The vast, shaggy creature was then, a local paper described, 'taken around the town to entertain by his frantic and clumsy gestures'. You'd likely be in a state too if you were blind and fettered in twists of straw bound into a point above your head. For this was no real bear, but a ploughman bedecked in the year's harvest, dancing along the streets in return for gifts – as the Whittlesea Straw Bear was wont, every year after Epiphany.

The Straw Bear's typical get-up is among 40 or so other pieces procured for this costume history. The show is the brainchild of Simon Costin (*WoI* March 2010) and Mellany Robinson, from the Museum of British Folklore, alongside dress historian Amy de la Haye. The curators' choice of Compton Verney is a natural one given its collection of British folk art – the UK's largest – which has been duly ransacked, and their timing is apposite. The idea came about during the pandemic, when lockdowns put paid to community traditions. The idea behind *Making Mischief* is not only to celebrate such customs, but to look at how they've changed, challenging any notions that they're stuck in the past. The fact that Leeds and Notting Hill carnivals are now bigger than ever goes some way to proving this.

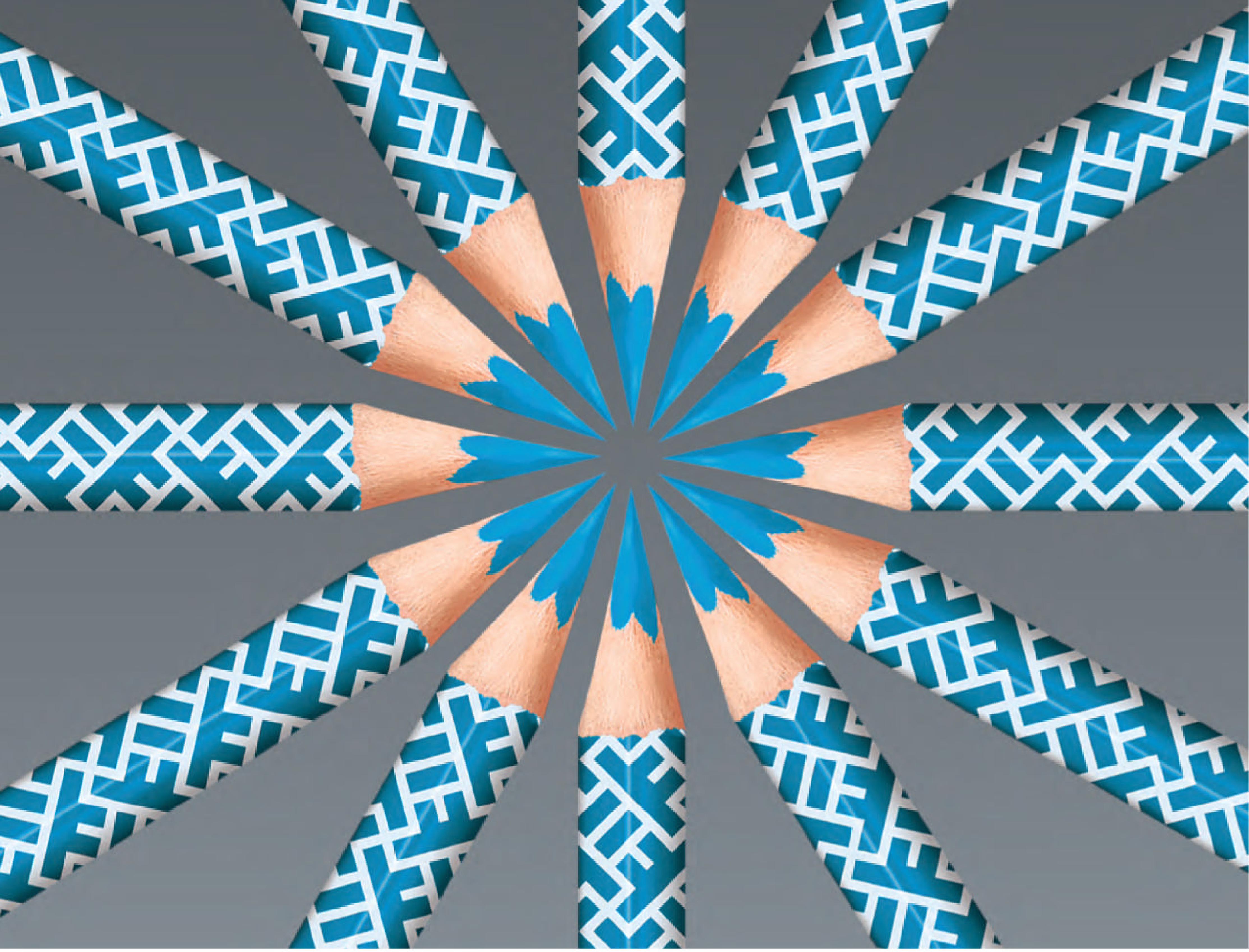
Both jamborees are represented here, the feathered flamboyance of carnival regalia finding counterpoints in a child's costume borrowed from Orkney, used for the island's annual Festival of the Horse, trussed and tousled with ribbons, bells, baubles and a bridle. Like so many others, this 200-year-old celebration, incorporating a ploughing match, is inherently seasonal, bound up with the dominance of the year's ebb and flow over rural life.

Borrowing these totemic costumes, many of which may never have left the place they were made, has proved challenging. One Orcadian, now in his nineties, ultimately felt that his boyhood horse costume was too precious to part with; such instances have necessitated curatorial flexibility – hence the inclusion of atavistic portraits of folk traditions by the Victorian photographer Sir John Benjamin Stone, alongside more recent imagery.

Dressed-up dolls, moreover, document the gamut of morris-dancing costumes across the country. Concisely plugging any gaps in the show, these mannequins also allow the curators to deftly engage with wider issues within the tradition – not least the use of Blackface makeup, which was finally abandoned by the Border morris troupes after 500 years, in the wake of 2020's Black Lives Matter protests.

Folk customs, we learn, have had to adapt. Take Boss Morris, for instance, a dazzling all-female Cotswolds morris group, or the Gay Bogies, the LGBTQI+ version of the viridescent protectors of Hastings' Jack in the Green. (They bring new meaning to the phrase 'queer as folk'.) Inclusivity turns out to be an important part of this show, which incorporates both written and aural displays, fortifying it against any criticism of cultural voyeurism. By including the voices of those who make and maintain these events, the show manages to move beyond the merely curious: this is the living, ever-changing landscape of British folk. Join the dance ⊛ *Grace McCloud is a writer and editor*

Sir John Benjamin Stone, photograph of the Players in the Horn Dance, c1900. This folk dance has been performed annually in the village of Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire, since at least the 17th century



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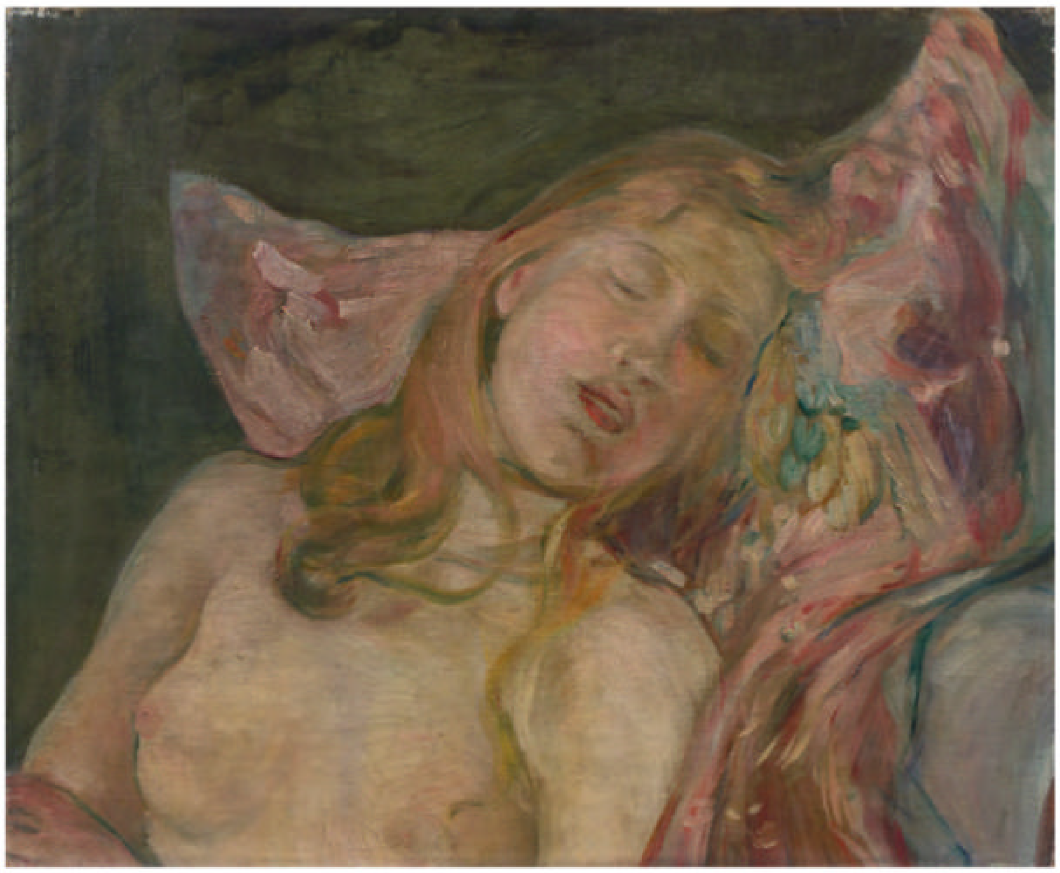

'Rest (Young Girl Sleeping)', 1892, oil on canvas, 38 × 46cm

Berthe Morisot: Shaping Impressionism
31 March–10 September
Dulwich Picture Gallery,
Gallery Rd, London SE21

For talent to flourish, stars must align – especially if you are a woman in the mid-19th century. And for French Impressionist Berthe Morisot, the support of a wealthy family, encouraging husband and close circle of artists as friends and in-laws (Renoir, Degas and latterly, Manet, older brother of Morisot's husband, Eugène) was essential. Nonetheless, she wrote in her diary: 'I don't think there has ever been a man who treated a woman as an equal and that's all I would have asked for, for I know I'm worth as much as they.'

Morisot initially copied works as a private student at the Louvre (the Ecole des Beaux-Arts was barred to women until 1897), later painting *en plein air* with her Barbizon teacher Corot. Her father was a high-ranking civil servant, her mother's family were public figures. Success was swift; exhibiting at the official Paris Salon at 23, Morisot became a founder member of the Impressionist group in 1874. Disciplined and committed, she contributed ten paintings to its first exhibition in 1874, helping organise all eight shows, and held weekly meetings for Degas, Mallarmé and Renoir at her marital home – while evolving her own art practice.

As a woman, Morisot was calculated about painting outside; either Eugène accompanied her, or she arrived early to avoid crowds. Later, she worked from her home in Passy. With white pigment and airily fresh brushwork, Morisot depicted her daughter, sister and other women in intimate, sincere registers, distilling complexity into diaphanous beauty. Degas, Monet and Renoir deeply admired her; Manet was shaped by the lightness of her touch. Yet on her death, Camille Pissarro wrote to his son: 'Poor Madame Morisot, the public hardly knows her!'

Dulwich Picture Gallery is giving the public a sharp nudge. For the first major Morisot exhibition in Britain in 70 years, a partnership with the Musée Marmottan Monet, 40 of her works will be shown alongside 20 works by the artists who influenced her – from Watteau to Fragonard, Reynolds to Gainsborough. The Anglo-French partnership is a quid pro quo: the former institution owns exquisite 18th-century pieces by the artists with whom Morisot critically engaged, while the latter holds one of the world's most important collections of the Impressionist's works, loaning some never before seen in the UK, including the elegiac *Julie Manet with her Greyhound Laerte* (1893).

For all her aesthetic lightness, Morisot was cerebral. *Femme à l'Eventail ou au Bal* (1875) presents a painting-within-a-painting. Wearing a ball gown, a dark-haired woman holds an open fan (Morisot's own) painted with an outdoor courtship termed a *fête galante*, a genre invented by Watteau. Wrought with immediate brushstrokes, the model appears in reverie in this perfect Impressionist portrait, the fan's open-and-shut, transitory nature encapsulating the fleeting moment – while the romance and music of the tryst transcends history and place. Morisot's artistic language was so infused with respect for the 18th century that the myth was propagated that she was related to Fragonard. Had Morisot not died of pneumonia at 54, contracted after nursing her daughter Julie through influenza, one wonders what she might have gone on to create. This exhibition places Impressionism's trailblazing founding member front and centre – where she belongs ❀ *Rebecca Swirsky is an art critic and fiction writer*

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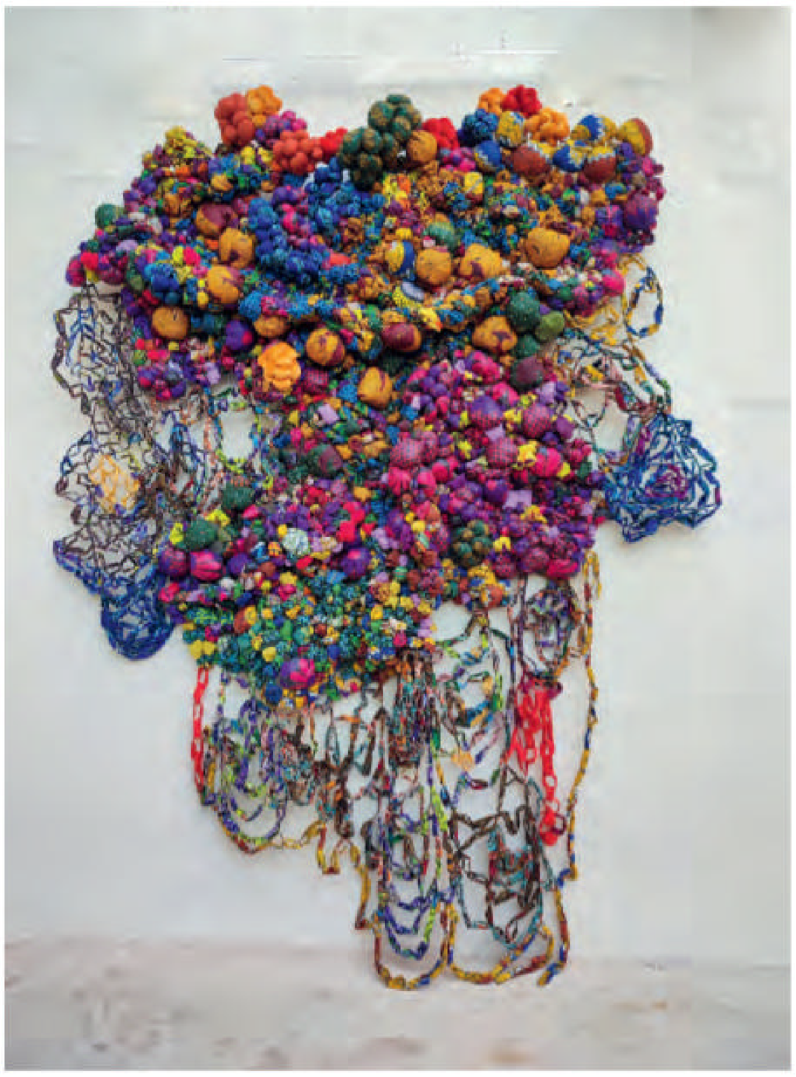
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1 Artists from Africa and its diaspora are set to have their biggest showcase yet at this year's Collect international craft-and-design fair in London. One of those leading the charge will be Nigerian Samuel Nnorom, whose sculptures made from *ankara* fabric address socio-political issues. Collect takes place at Somerset House, Strand, London WC2 (collectfair.org.uk), 3–5 March.

2 Chelsea Textiles has been handcrafting wooden furniture for all of 15 years, but the details and techniques used make the pieces look like they've been around for an eternity. New to its collection is this timeless chest featuring the brand's signature distressing – which, rumours suggest, took years to perfect. Chelsea Textiles, 40 Pimlico Rd, London SW1 (020 7584 5544; chelseatextiles.com).

3 Nanz has unveiled its latest collection of fine hardware, featuring updated classics and experimental new styles. Take the '8020' knob, which has been redesigned as a two-piece brass set with a powder-coated black handle, or the '8042' (shown), with central disc in a choice of colours. Available in both plated and patinated finishes, all items are made to order. Ring 001 212 367 7000, or visit nanz.com.

4 Known for its innovative use of materials, Zinc Textile has made its first foray into leather. The range, 'Leather Volume 1', consists of five styles, each available in up to ten colours, bearing welcome variations in the grain. The bull hides used are chrome-tanned to ensure they're as soft as they're durable. Zinc Textile, Design Centre Chelsea Harbour, London SW10 (01623 750005; zinctextile.com) ⊛

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VISITOR'S BOOK

How often have we switched on a home-renovation programme and watched the presenter wince at the subjects' wanton disregard for their runaway budget? Those same hosts would have had good cause to suck their teeth had they followed the progress of Christian Dior's very own escape to the château – the Château de la Colle Noire in Provence, that is, our first stop-off. While the great couturier was obviously a whizz when it came to cutting cloth, he was never, ever one to cut corners: by the time he died in 1957 he was 80 million francs in debt, not all of it spent on gaufrage velvet, gold swan taps and a marble bath Cleopatra herself would covet. But still, we're sure you'll agree, the result *was* rather ravishing. Near Dakar, material concerns of a different kind exercise Aïssa Dione, who's spent 30 years fighting to save Senegal's textile industry and now makes the most wonderful *manjak*, the country's traditional cloth. Over in Los Angeles, we catch up with photographer and designer Matthias Vriens, who has been weaving magic of his own in a house once occupied by the actor-turned-decorator Billy Haines, while in St Moritz we see how one fashion mogul has gone decidedly off-piste, decoratively speaking, by eschewing archetypal Alpine style in favour of floor-to-ceiling inky black. After all that tone-on-tone Brutalism, Benton End – Cedric Morris's 16th-century house in Suffolk – looks more than usually colourful in a series of enchanting photographs taken by a certain Tim Walker. Though broad-minded (and then some), even Morris might have raised an eyebrow at Walker's way with some of the irises still grown there. Finally, to Paris, where we find ourselves in a duplex apartment that's a sophisticated suffusion of early 1970s style – one boasting some breathtakingly beautiful views of the City of Lights…

Pour
Dior grand artiste
Marc Chagall

A guest book in Christian Dior's château, La Colle Noire, bears a number of illustrious signatures, including Marc Chagall's. See page 84. Photograph: Ricardo Labougle

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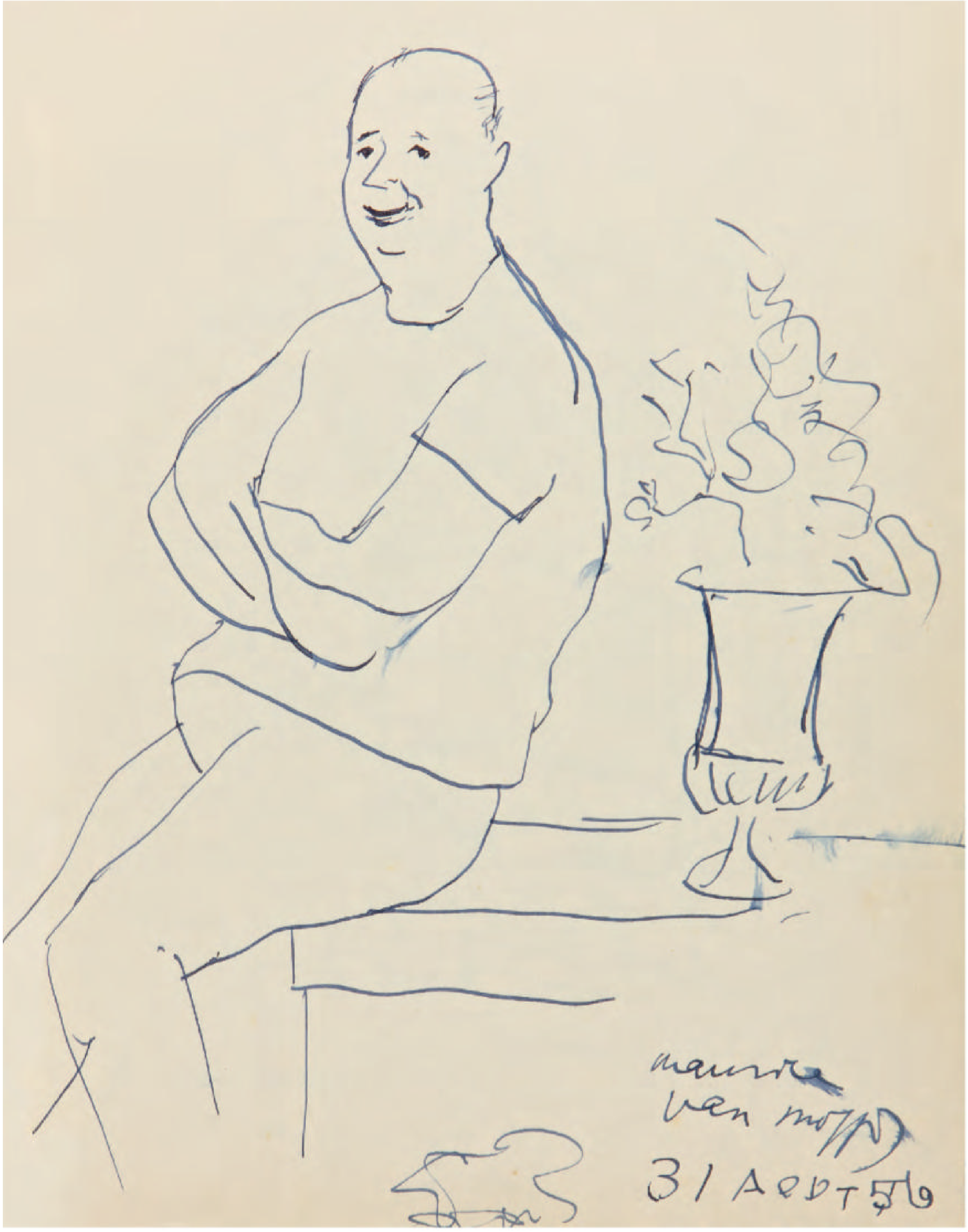
CHRISTIAN'S SYMBOLISM

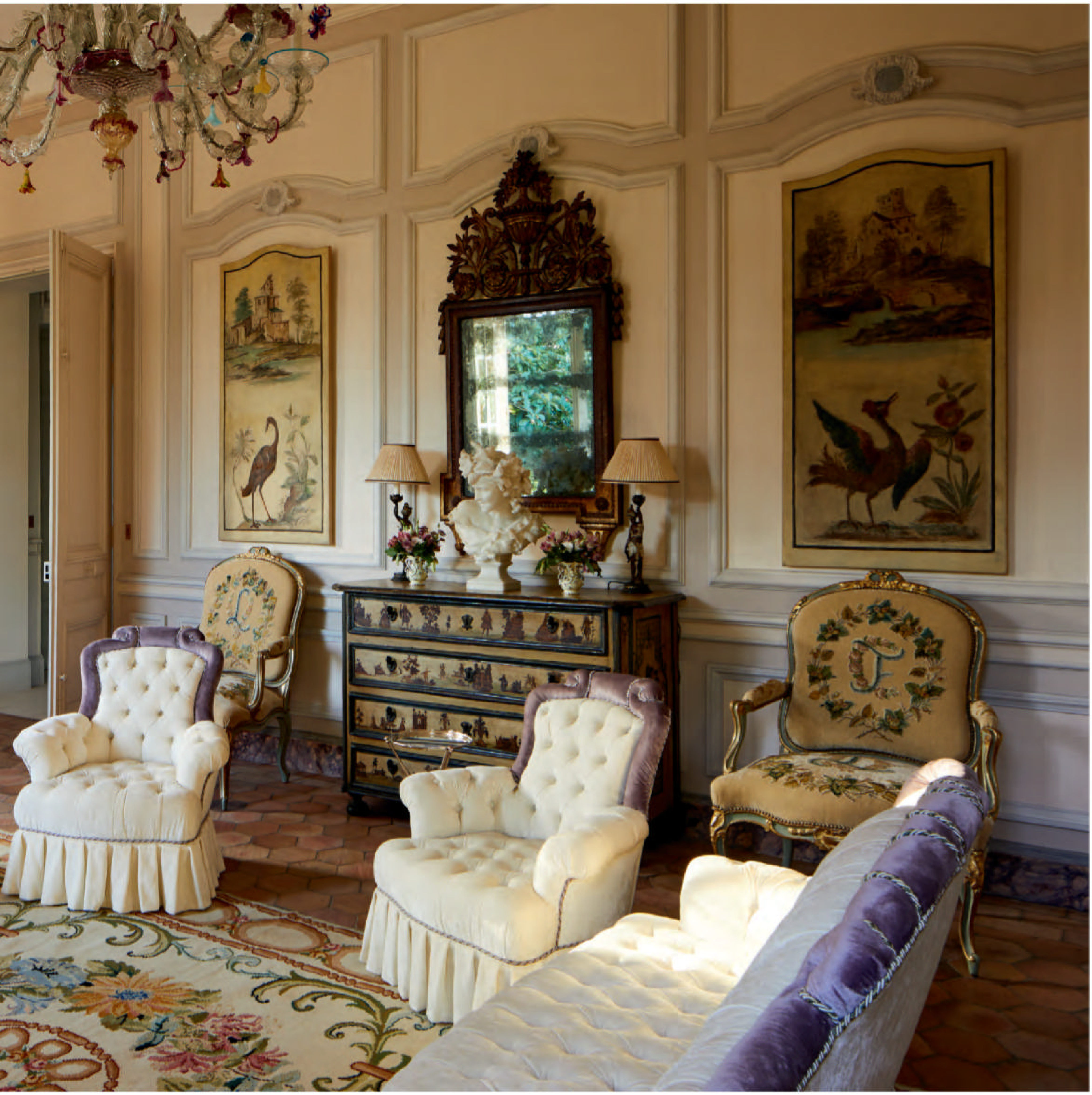
Compasses, roses and stars were, in their different ways, talismans for Christian Dior. Whether to commemorate the past or ward off bad luck, the couturier incorporated them all into La Colle Noire, the delapidated château in Provence he bought in 1950. It was a cruel twist of fate, then, that after finishing the reconstruction, the progenitor of the New Look died prematurely – though not, reports Amy Fine Collins, before a roll call of luminaries had feasted in its fragrant gardens. Photography: Ricardo Labougle

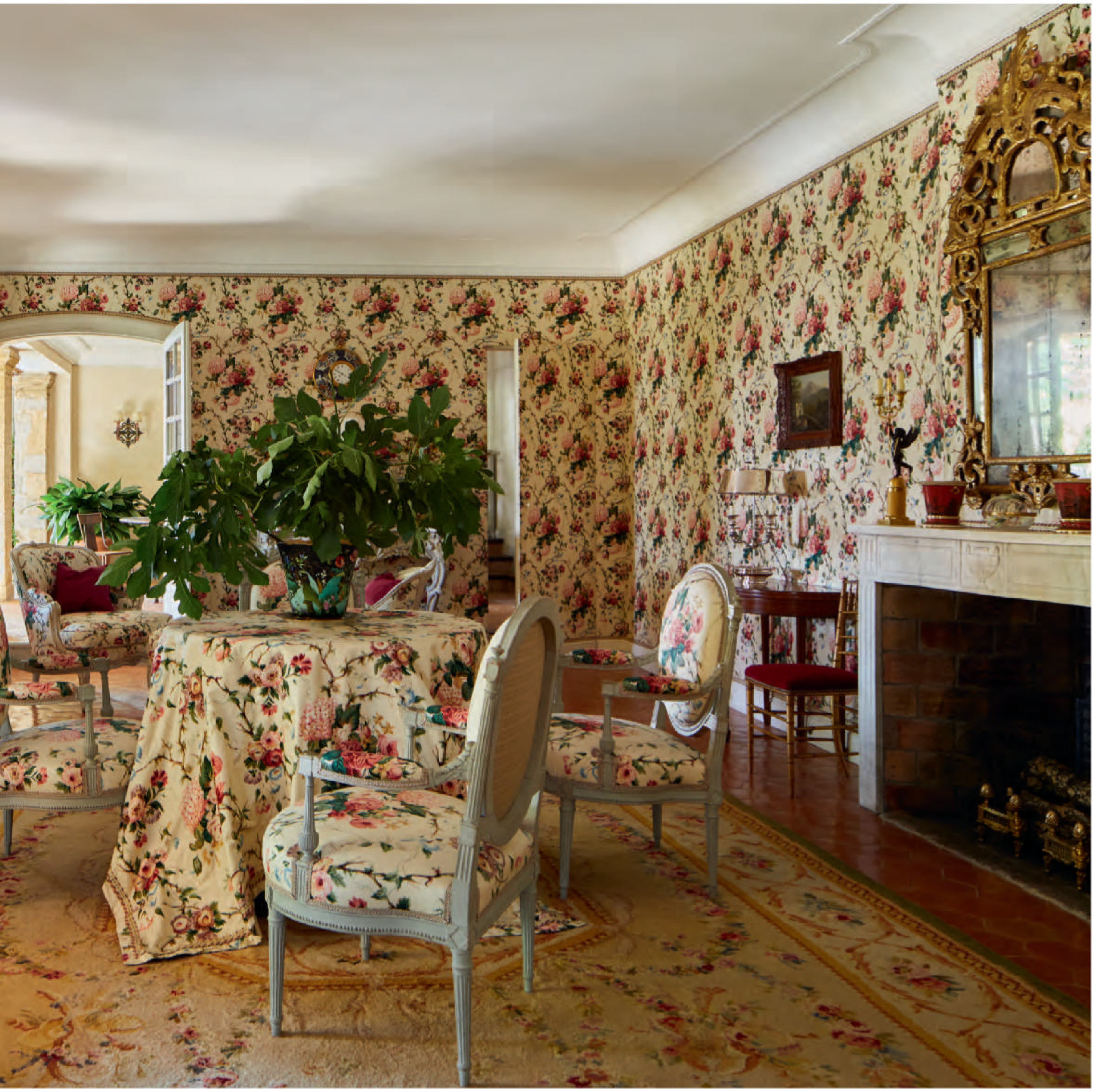


Previous pages, left: this vintage photo (c1956) shows Christian Dior standing among his vines. Philippe Deliau, the landscape architect who reconstituted La Colle Noire's grounds (now reduced to 12 acres), observes that much as Dior desired a retreat with aromatic flowers to the fore, he also paid homage to the land's agricultural origins. Right: from the Directoire chair at his desk, the owner looked out on one of a pair of stone sphinxes in the garden. Opposite: the hexagonal vestibule with its pink-and-grey pebble mosaic floor centred on a compass, or 'rose of the winds'. This page: in 1956, illustrator Maurice van Moppès sketched this caricature of Dior in the guest book. Both men died prematurely the year after. Sittings editor: Hamish Bowles

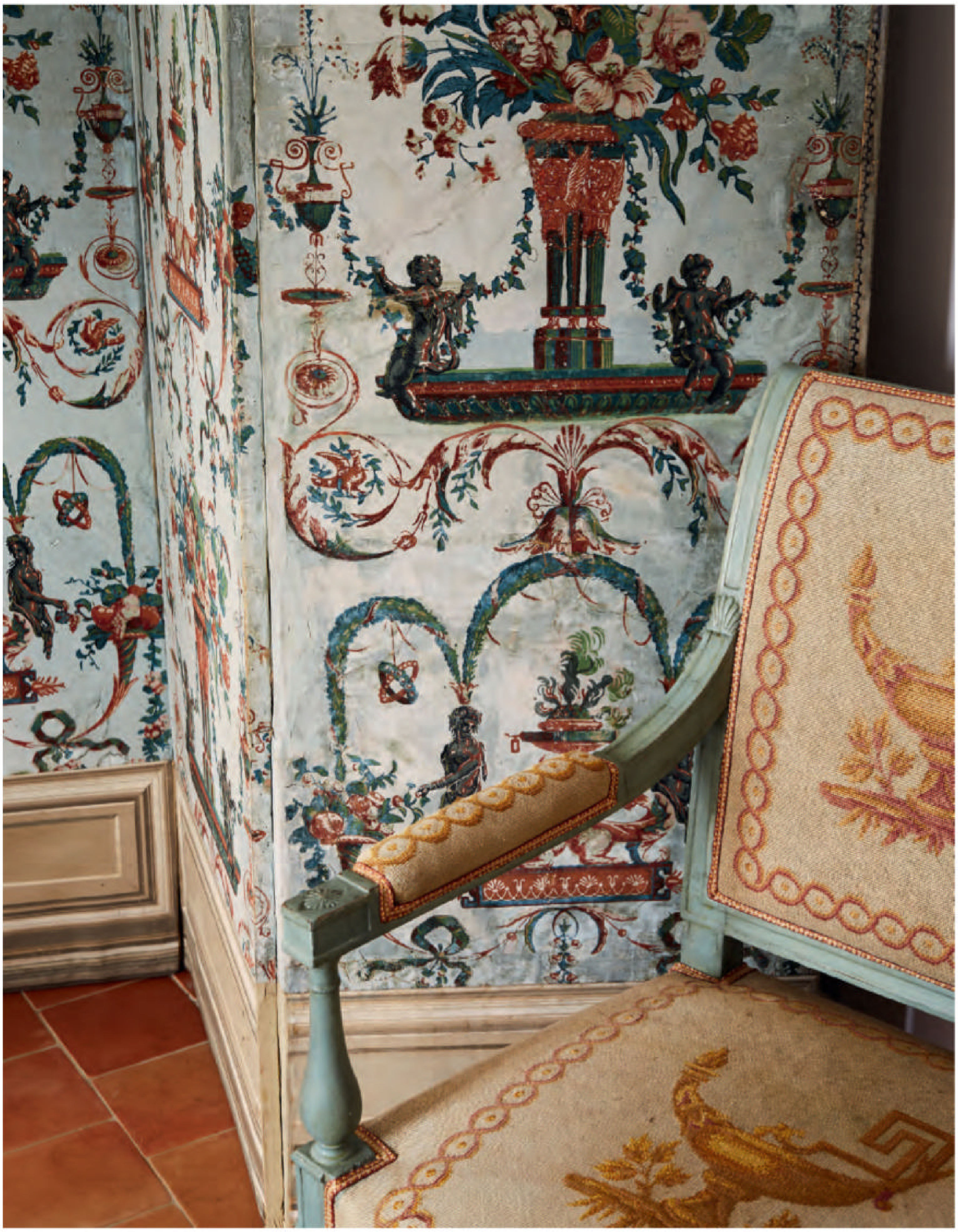
Above: a 45m-long ornamental pond, the 'water mirror' with its sculpture of Diana was inspired by Dior's mother's gardens at Les Rhumbs. The owner would walk along its perimeter, scooping out fallen oak leaves with a shrimp net, and sometimes ceremoniously release goldfish into it. Opposite: the 'grand salon', paved with Salernes terracotta tiles (laid upside-down for a more rustic effect), remained empty at the time of the couturier's death. Its present décor is a fanciful reconstruction by production designer Yves de Marseille with Proustian touches and accents of chic 1950s café society. The games table alludes to Dior's obsession with cards. Palm trees nod to decorator Emilio Terry, and the swagged mouldings the theatre work of another friend, Christian Bérard

Opposite: bowing to Dior's one recorded wish for the décor in the 'grand salon', Yves de Marseille incorporated a pair of Louis XVI consoles surmounted by gilt mirrors. Otherwise, to give a sense of the gradual passing of time, as in an old family estate, De Marseille combined the couturier's love of the 18th century with 19th-century romantic touches. The oval windows Dior worked out with architect Andreï Svetchine. The paintings are meant to suggest the owner's pre-dressmaking past as an art dealer. This page: the 'petit salon' is decorated in a mix of styles descended from 19th-century eclecticism – seen, for example, in the tufted, skirted sofa and chairs

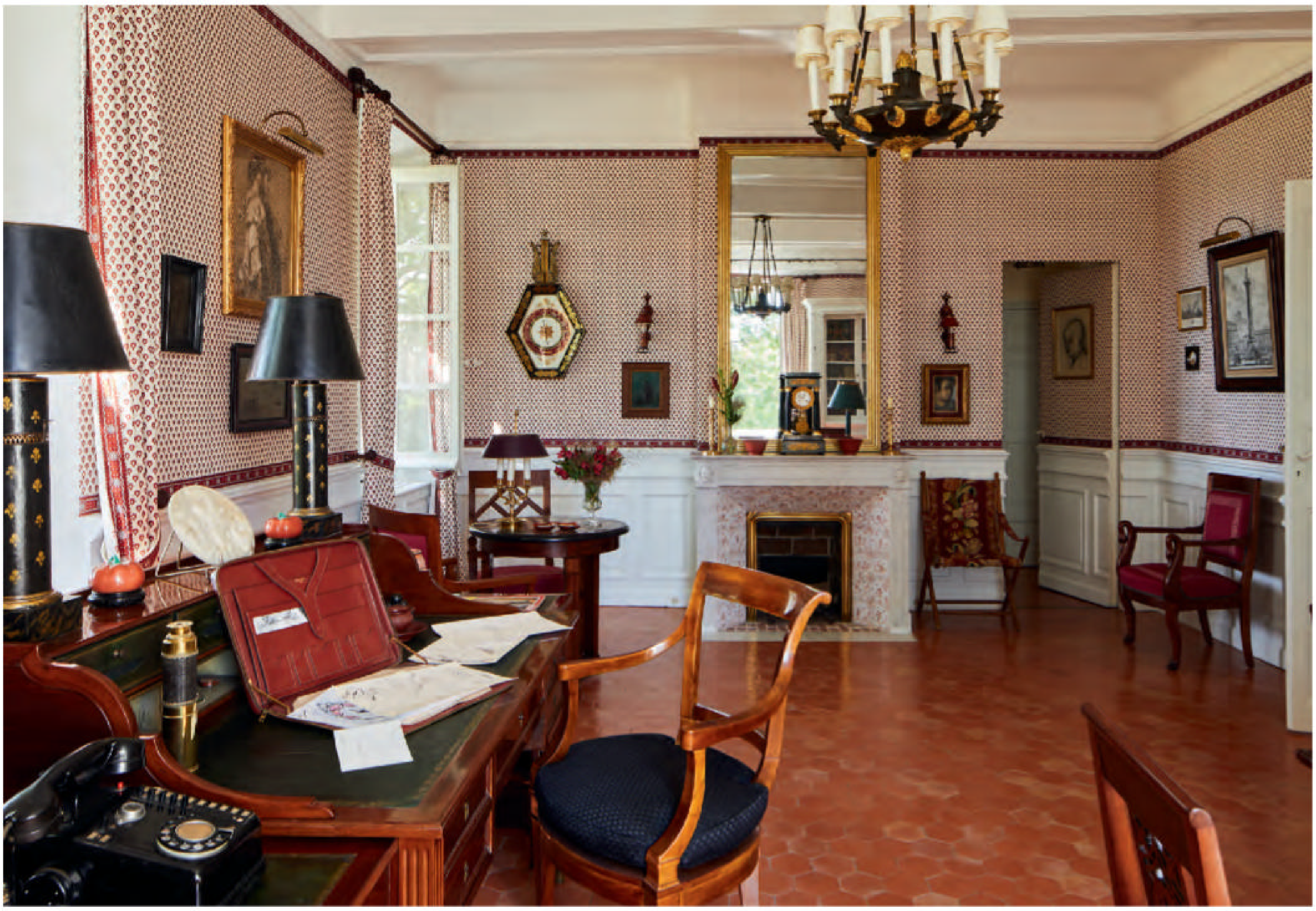




Above: in the summer salon, on the ground floor, Dior expressed his love of Britain via bolts of Colefax & Fowler fabric, covering walls, the Louis XVI fauteuils, a 'duchesse brisée' chair, a folding screen and a guéridon. Opposite: a writing desk in faux bamboo (très chic in the 1950s) is lit by lamps whose base and shades are faced with playing cards, alluding to the owner's favourite diversion. This is the 'little drawing room' suggested to Dior by 'Louise de Vilmorin's place at Verrières… only red instead of blue'. He sometimes took his meals here



Above: in Catherine Dior's bedroom, a screen painted in a 'grotteschi' pattern zigzags behind a Provençal painted Louis XVI fauteuil with a Neoclassical Aladdin's-lamp motif. Opposite: made using 18th-century wooden blocks, a Pierre Frey yellow linen velvet swathes walls and seating in the 'lit d'alcove' of the couturier's small bedroom in his private apartment in the old wing of the house, reached via a narrow, serpentine staircase

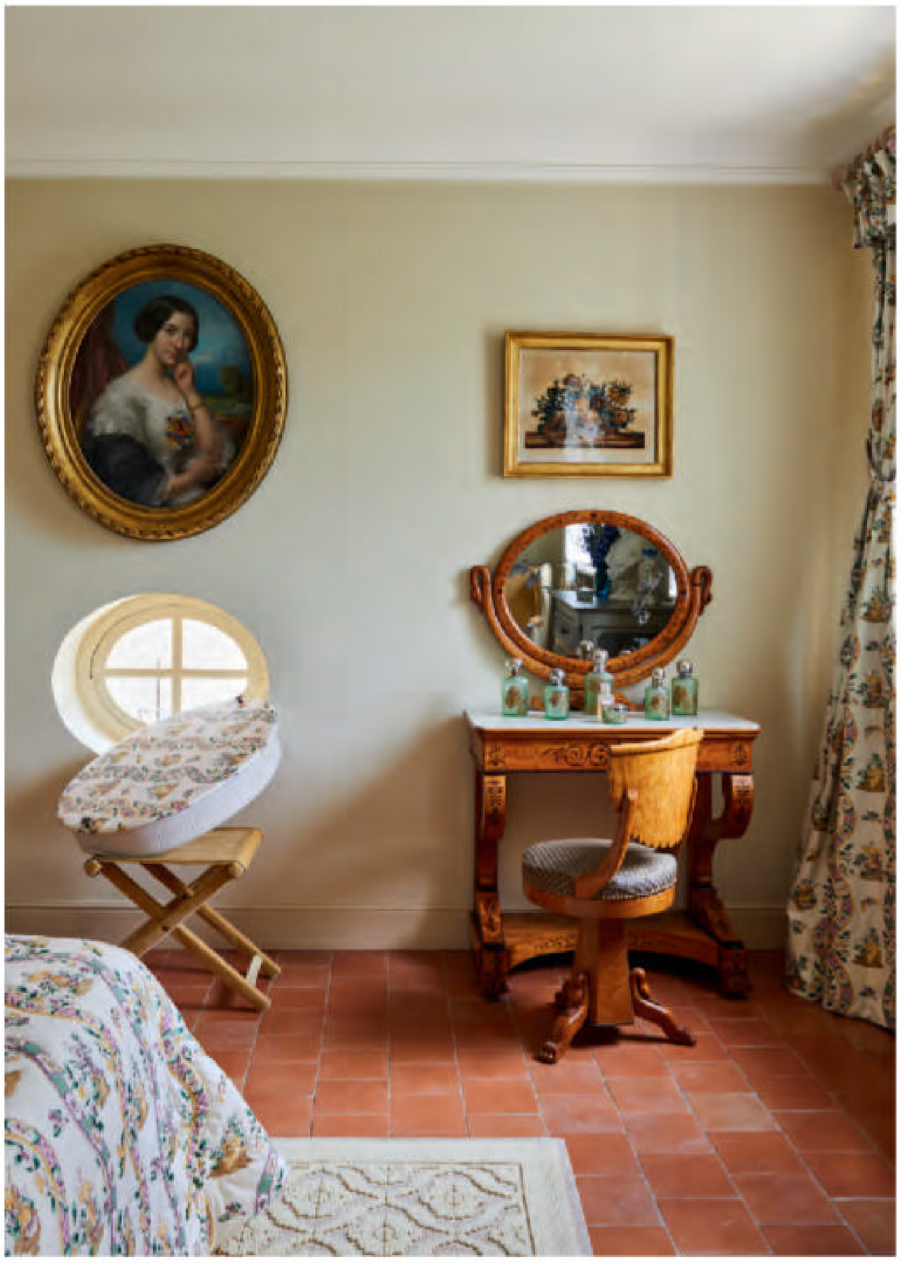


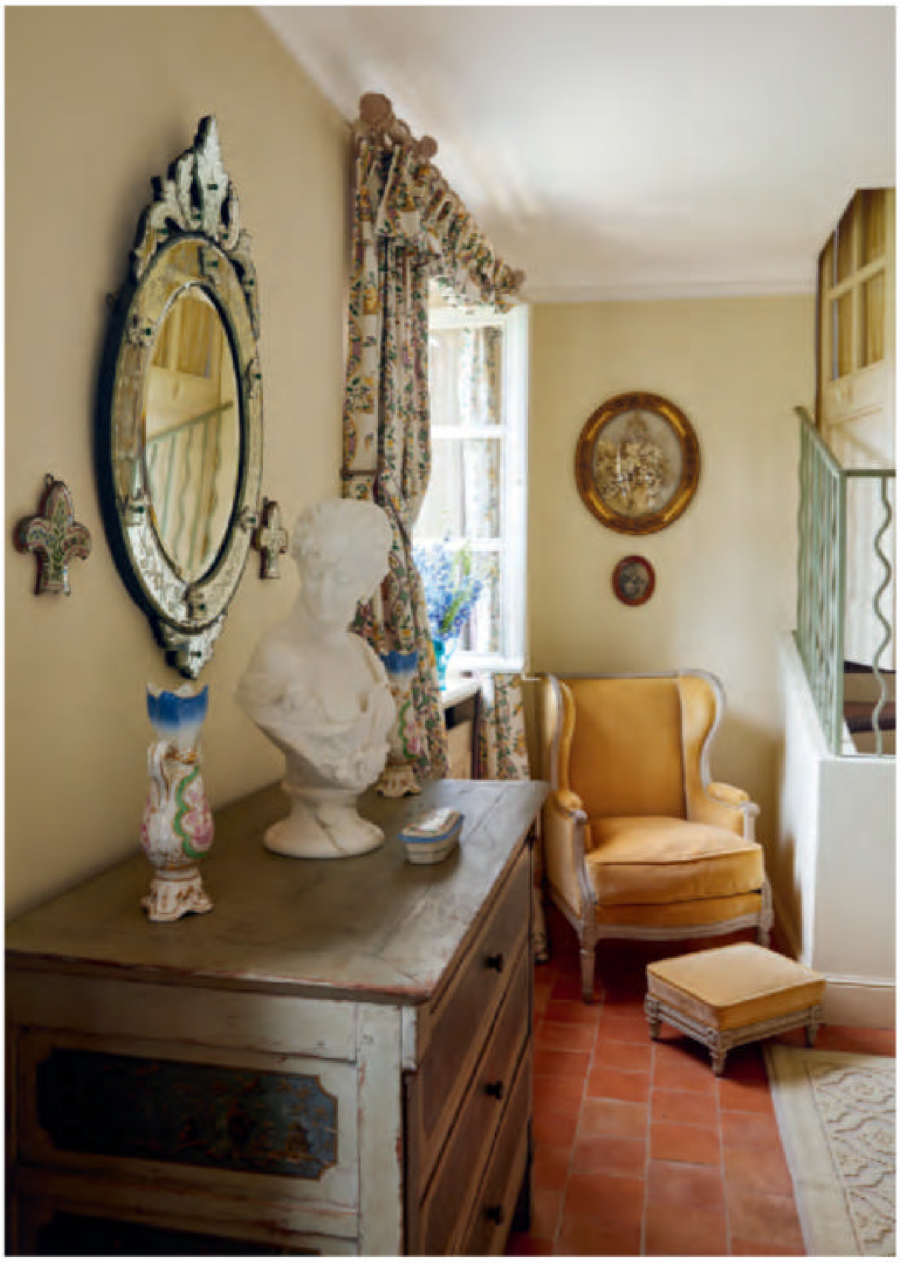
Above: in the designer's office, a pair of Carcel column lamps decorated with fleurs-de-lis (on the Louis XVI mahogany desk) are original to the room. Sketches for dresses spill out of a leather portfolio, gold-stamped 'Christian Dior Paris'. Hanging against a traditional Provençal fabric by Olivades, the Charles X barometer was the very last object Dior bought for La Colle Noire. Opposite: the curved doors in the owner's bathroom – in his private apartment – are original. Dior's sketches for the gilt swan's-head taps survive, and he also designed the urn-shaped water tank. The bathtub is antique, carved from Carrara marble. Water to the house and irrigation for the gardens was brought in at great expense – the Var, in southeast France, is a dry region

In his 1957 autobiography Christian Dior revealed that his 'real hobby' had always been architecture. It 'has fascinated me ever since I was a child', he wrote. Accordingly, he considered his couture creations to be 'ephemeral architecture, glorifying the proportions of the female body'. To him each sumptuous dress was an edifice, built on foundations of whalebone, padding and horsehair. For his autumn/winter 1950 Oblique Line, he even likened his silhouettes to pediments. Perhaps he was thinking even more architecturally than usual because in October of that year he purchased the Château de la Colle Noire, in the Var region of France, the renovation of which would occupy him for the remainder of his life.

Dior fixated on La Colle Noire partly for sentimental reasons. His adored little sister, Catherine, lived nearby, in Callian, where she still inhabited the same humble farmhouse the family had moved into from Normandy, after their father's bankruptcy in the 1930s. But La Colle Noire was a far grander, if more dilapidated, structure. Set amid 125 acres, the château – named after the terrain's scrubby hills – had been built between 1858 and 1861 and passed through at least three owners by the time Dior acquired it. With a clear vision of the house's transformation already in mind, he hired the Russian-born architect Andreï Svetchine, whose previous projects had included Provençal-style villas for Marc Chagall and the fashion designer Edward Molyneux as well as the restoration of La Colombe d'Or hotel.

The château's front door opens on to a hexagonal, pilastered vestibule, whose Provençal *calade* floor Dior imbued with private symbolism. As he wanted his residence both 'to bear the mark of my ancestors and the weight of the centuries', he designed the pebble mosaic in the form of a pink-and-grey compass, a reference to Dior's boyhood home, Les Rhumbs (Compass Points), in Granville. The symbol, with its cardinal and ordinal directions, is known alternatively as a star, the very apotropaic device Dior had adopted in 1946 after stumbling over one in a Paris street, just before meeting Marcel Boussac, his future backer. The compass is also





Above left: Catherine Dior's bedroom offers a further example of the oval windows added to the fenestration. The shape is echoed in the dressing-table mirror and the portrait. Above right: from this mostly fanciful evocation of a room for the owner's sister, stairs lead to the south turret (Dior also put in a north one for symmetry)

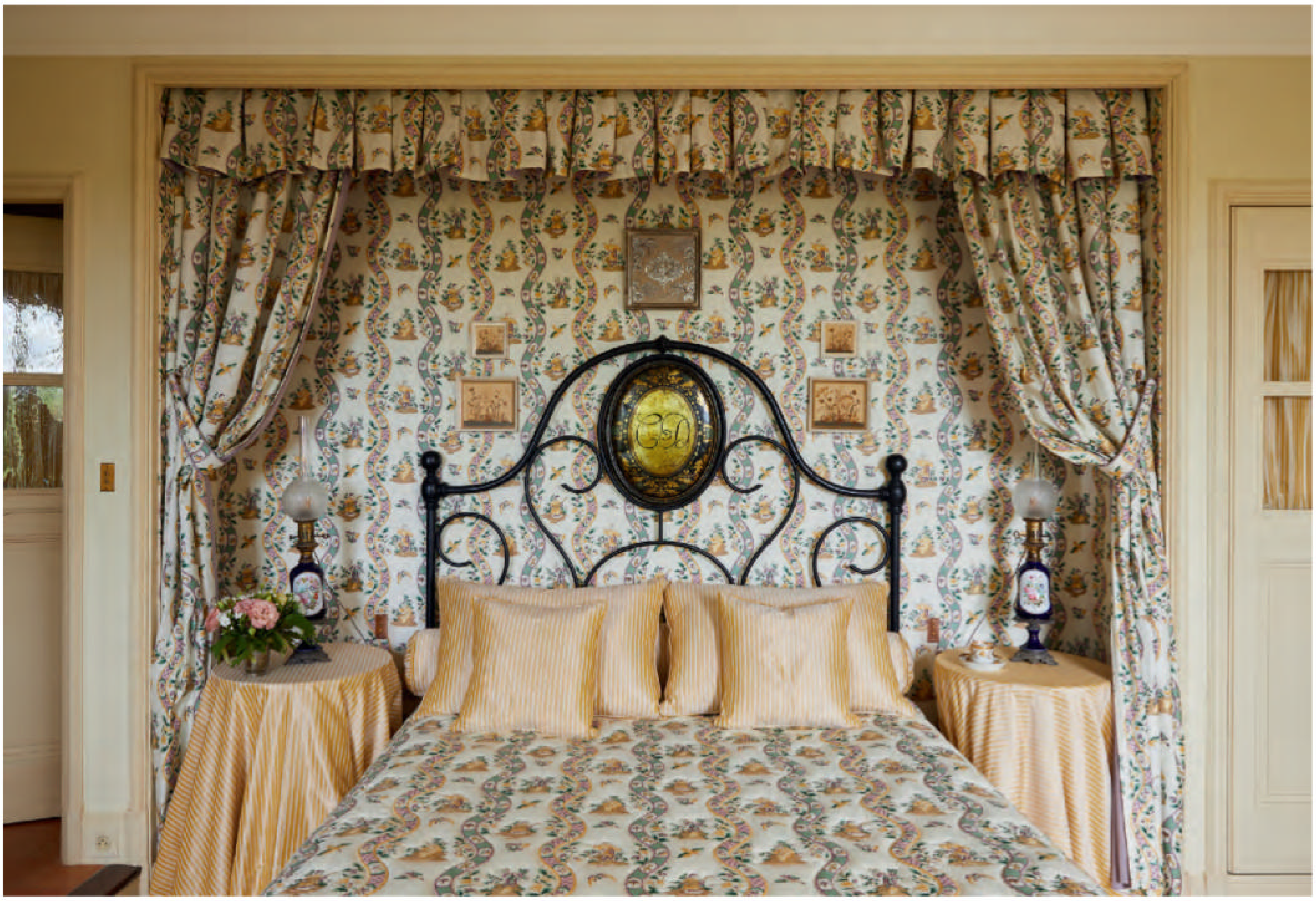
called the 'rose of the winds', and the rose itself was a Dior talisman. A profusion of them bloomed in his mother's luxuriant gardens at Granville; in Callian, he and Catherine dug up rose bushes during the war to make way for the sweet peas and green beans that would sustain the family; and the May rose was both a signature flower at La Colle Noire and a heart note of his first fragrance, Miss Dior.

From this emblem-rich entry, visitors pass into an antechamber where a deckle-edged guest book lies open. Because the metamorphosis of La Colle Noire took more than half a decade, the master of the house only received guests there during the final year of his life. But he managed to host more than 130 callers between 6 August 1956 and 28 August 1957, and many of the names inscribed on the register's opening 15 pages are immortal: Pierre Bergé, Bernard Buffet, Marc Chagall, Jean Cocteau, Marie-Laure de Noailles.

The 18-metre-long grand salon remained incomplete when the couturier died that year; its present décor is a fanciful reconstruction by Yves de Marseille. In deference to Dior's one known wish for the room's furnishings, the production designer installed a pair of late Louis XVI consoles surmounted by gilt mirrors. To simulate a sense of the slow accretion of time, De Marseille combined Dior's ruling passion for the 18th century with 19th-century romantic flourishes, Proustian touches and chic 1950s accents.

In the summer salon, Dior's anglophilia is expressed in yards of Colefax & Fowler fabric. A faux-bamboo writing desk is illuminated by a pair of lamps embellished with playing cards, a nod to Dior's mania for canasta, bridge, solitaire and tarot readings ('a sign', Dior wrote self-deprecatingly, of his 'intellectual poverty').

A narrow, twisting staircase leads upstairs to the couturier's private apartment in the old wing of the house; here he stayed while construction took place. In the small bedroom, his *lit d'alcove* is draped in yellow linen velvet. Carved into the moulding above is his star, protecting him while he slept. Here he had the first of his two breakfasts, the second being taken downstairs in the panelled dining room.



An (again oval) escutcheon on the wrought-iron bedhead bears the initials of Catherine. The fabric dressing both bed and alcove is a chinoiserie cretonne. After the war Dior's sister, a decorated fighter for the Resistance who was tortured by the Nazis, worked as a florist and then as a flower farmer in Provence supplying perfumers

Two steps up from Dior's bedroom is his office, which closely approximates archival photos of it. Most of its fixtures were purchased by LVMH from Catherine Dior's 2008 estate auction, among them the couturier's Louis XVI mahogany desk and Bakelite telephone; one of its ten buttons put him directly through to his sister.

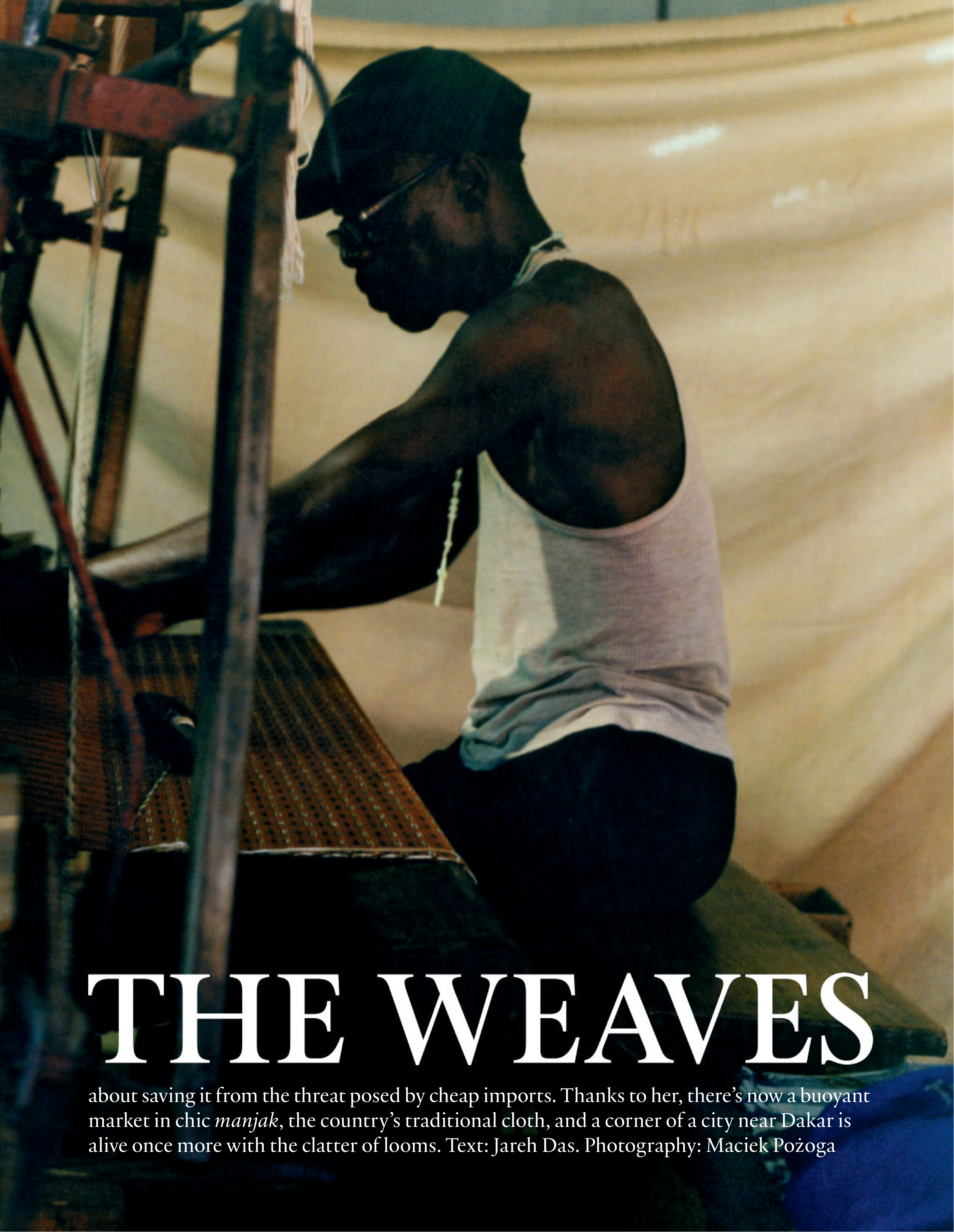
The King of Couture recalled how, during his 1939 mobilisation in the countryside, he 'developed a feeling for working the land, the cycle of the seasons, and the perpetually renewed mystery of germination'. With this 'strong streak of the peasant' still coursing through his veins, he puttered about the gardens of La Colle Noire in shorts or patched trousers, pushing a wheelbarrow marked CD or wielding a pickaxe. Lucienne Rostagno, one of his workers, remembered that 'above all what he wanted were fragrant flowers': roses, lily-of-the-valley, lavandin and white jasmine. The scent of the last of these in particular had awakened in him the idea for Miss Dior perfume, which he said 'was born of those Provençal evenings, where young jasmine plays a descant to the melody of the night and the land'. Philippe Deliau, his landscape architect, observes that much as Dior desired a 'festive, fragrant' haven, he also honoured the land's agricultural origins by raising olives, grapes, cherries, almonds, citrus and May roses, which must be harvested at first bloom.

In spite of the amulets integrated directly into La Colle Noire's structure, the house was in some ways unlucky for its owner. He died at 52, less than two months after throwing his last banquet under the pergola. Astoundingly, the man whose business accounted for half of France's exports to the United States died 80 million francs in debt. In search of a 'real home', as he put it, he ended up with an edenic folly, the rehabilitation of which consumed colossal sums.

Ironically, it was, in part, the profitability of the Dior empire that enabled LVMH to buy back the house in 2013 and to finish the founder's final project in a manner consistent with his wishes. The longed-for enclosed garden, meant to evoke the lost utopia of Dior's childhood, blooms again, his paradise regained ⊛

RULING

Senegal's artisan-textile industry might easily have sunk without trace but for the persistence of one Aïssa Dione. Fearing for its future, the artist and fabric designer set



THE WEAVES

about saving it from the threat posed by cheap imports. Thanks to her, there's now a buoyant market in chic *manjak*, the country's traditional cloth, and a corner of a city near Dakar is alive once more with the clatter of looms. Text: Jareh Das. Photography: Maciek Pożoga

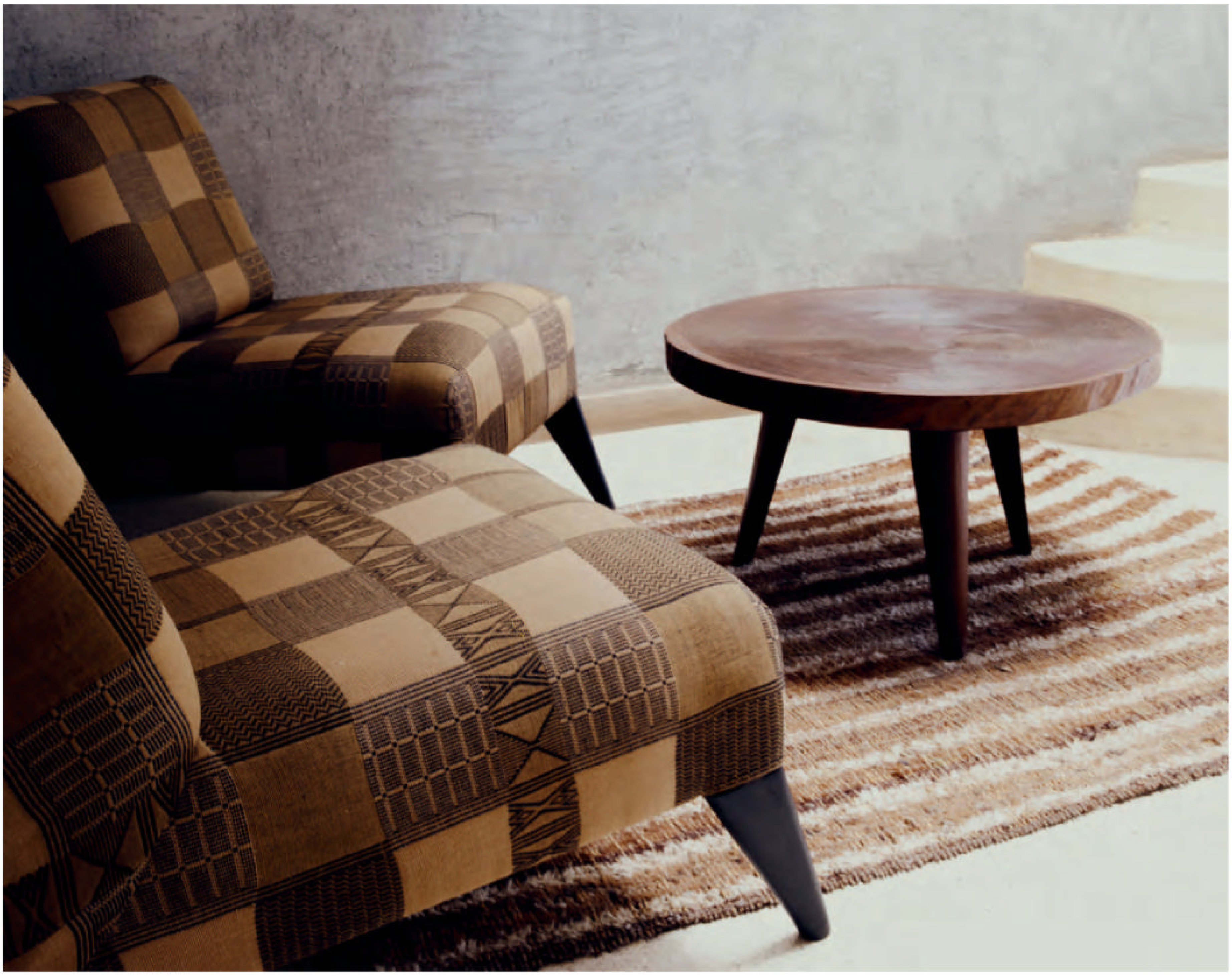
Ghana has its woven cloth known as *kente*. In Nigeria, it is *adire*, an indigo resist-dye cloth. *Dida* is Ivory Coast's raffia material. *Bogolan*, popular in Mali, is dyed with fermented mud. Hand-woven designs of traditional African textiles are as diverse as the ethnicities spread across the continent. Every location has its own tradition.

For Senegal, it is *manjak*, a woven cloth that originates in Guinea-Bissau but also springs up throughout Gambia and Cape Verde. Textiles on this huge continent are not only central to personal adornment; they are also revealing and vital aspects of communication, signifying economic worth and class status, as well as being key to ceremonies, from births and deaths to weddings. Passed down from one generation to the next, the customs involved in creating them are crucial to the continuity and future of African textiles.

In the capital city of Dakar, French/Senegalese artist and textile designer Aïssa Dione has spent three decades reviving and reinventing the country's traditional cloth. She founded her company, Aïssa Dione Tissus, in 1992 with the long-term goal of keeping fabric weaving there alive and creating new markets both locally and internationally. Central to her approach is an emphasis on a 'slow' industry and making a long-established product relevant for modern tastes. Its sustainability can also serve as a template for other African nations, where indigenous crafts struggle to survive in the face of cheap imported fabrics and a lack of government investment. Working out of a factory located in Rufisque, near Dakar, Dione oversees more than 100 employees who use traditional looms, as well as restored mechanised ones bought from abandoned factories, to create luxurious pieces from African cotton and centuries-old *manjak*.

'I arrived in Senegal in my twenties having trained as a painter in France,' she explains over the telephone. 'I began looking at batik [wax-resist dyeing] initially to make clothing. That then led to looking at traditional Senegalese textiles, which are dominated by hand-weaving, specifically *manjak*, which is male-led. My interest is fabrics for interiors and I thought, well,

Previous pages: Edouard Sanga, an employee at Aïssa Dione's factory in the port city of Rufisque, operates one of several looms acquired from redundant mills over the years. Some of these have been adapted to allow wider runs of fabric than normal to be made. Top: cotton is spun into yarn ready for weaving. Opposite: modern geometric designs adorn these cloths, which are a blend of cotton, raffia and silk



rather than fabricating with imported textiles, let's create fabrics 100 per cent made here in Senegal as we have access to cotton and traditional weavers.'

Unsurprisingly perhaps, she's had challenges to overcome. One client requested upholstered furniture and curtains, which initially posed a problem. '*Manjak* weaving is spun on looms ranging between 15cm and 20cm,' says Dione, 'which for interior fabrics just isn't wide enough. So we had to innovate. Working with the weavers, we increased the width of the textile to 90–140cm to make it commercially viable.'

Minimal, distinct geometric patterns are a feature of Dione's fabrics, while motifs spun from locally sourced raffia, silk and cotton draw on Kuban, Congolese, Manjak and Gambian culture. 'Indigenous crafts made on the continent need to be elevated to luxury products,' she says. With that comes a higher aesthetic and economic value – and the result is a company basking in a certain renown. Clients include Hermès, Fendi, Liaigre, Peter Marino and Alara Lagos. She's also worked with Yinka Shonibare and India Mahdavi on Sketch in London, while Aïssa Dione for Okujun is a long-term collaboration producing interior textiles, including plains, ikats and prints, that bring together both African and Japanese techniques.

'It makes no sense whatsoever that cotton sheets are imported when cotton grows all across this continent,' Dione says. 'From weaving to pottery to basket-weaving, there's so much scope to scale this for export while tackling production locally to solve issues around importation and job creation.'

To this end, Dione has expanded her operation to produce a concise range of furniture, from upholstered sofas and chairs to tables and lamps, all crafted from indigenous woods. By supporting carpentry, upholstery, metalwork and other skills, the workshops enable an end-to-end design and production process that is proudly Made in Africa.

While passionate about protecting time-honoured traditions, Dione is also alert to the very pressing need to nurture a younger generation of artisanal workers, chiefly through fair pay

Opposite: Tidiane Barry, a weaver at the Aïssa Dione Tissus factory, holds a thoroughly modern take on 'manjak', Senegal's traditional cloth. This page, top: all of the firm's fabrics take their names from African places or legend. Here 'Ibadan' (after the Nigerian city) covers a pair of 'Yuki' slipper chairs from Dione's 'Weaving Art Objects' furniture line. The hand-carved table is from the same collection

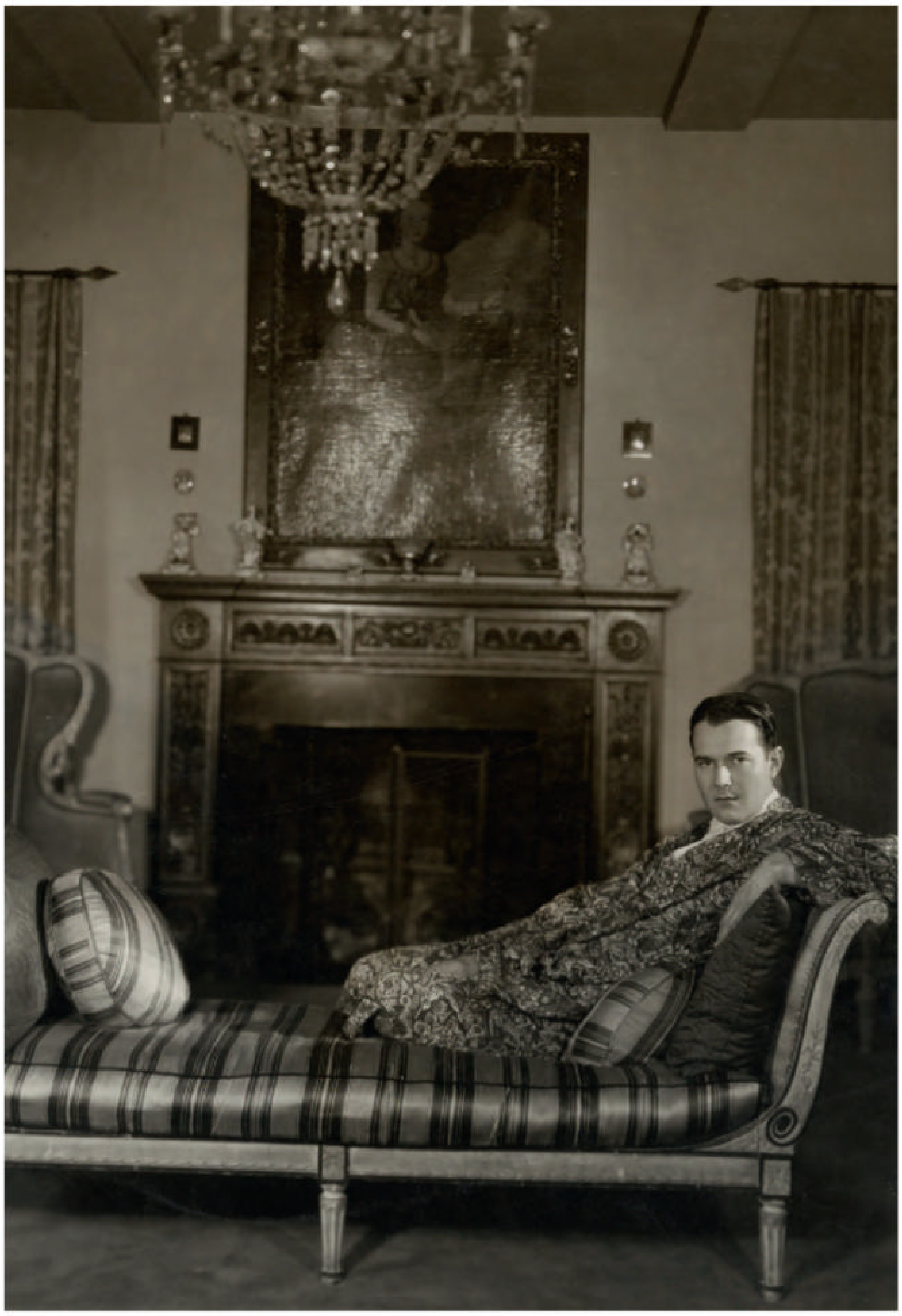
and employee benefits. Visit her gallery, Galerie Atiss Dakar, and you will also see that Dione has also been busy exploring the coming together of art and textiles. Exhibitions there have highlighted how contemporary African artists are using traditions to illuminate connections and continuities. A recent show, *Art and Textiles Stories*, is a good example. The roster included Aboubakar Fofana from Mali, who reinvigorates and redefines West African indigo dyeing techniques, and Nigerian fashion designer Bubu Ogisi, whose pieces imaginatively reuse natural and non-natural materials, including crochet made from recycled plastic and fibre from agricultural waste. Fatim Soumaré, from Senegal, exploits the Falé tradition of transforming cotton into thread by hand, while Cedric Mizero collaborates with communities across his country, Rwanda, engaging them in conversations about indigenous practice. He sees this as a means of effecting collective healing. Showcasing textiles and fibre-making across borders and timelines is shining a fresh light on histories and their meaning for the present.

By forging closer bonds between art and industry, Dione is proving that textile manufacturing across Africa, in all its dazzling forms, can be both innovative and sustainable. Materials, techniques and aesthetics combine to produce items of artistic and commercial value. It's vital this goes on: for jobs, market demand and the preservation and spread of culture ⊛ *Aïssa Dione. Visit aissadionetissus.com. Galerie Atiss Dakar. Visit galerieatissdakar.com*

Top: like all of the furniture in Dione's range, this bookcase is made from locally sourced wood. Opposite: dressed head to toe in textiles produced by her brand, the designer herself looks out on to Mermoz beach, a popular resort close to her home in the Senegalese capital

In the 1930s this Los Angeles house played a leading role in the post-Hollywood career of William Haines, the matinée idol who took to decorating when he was blacklisted by his film studio for being openly gay. He's long gone, but his property is proving a scene-stealer once more after the most sympathetic of facelifts. Enter the protagonist responsible – Matthias Vriens. He tells William Norwich about the scenery he kept and ditched in the making of Castle Haines: the Comeback. Photography: Dusan Vuksanovic

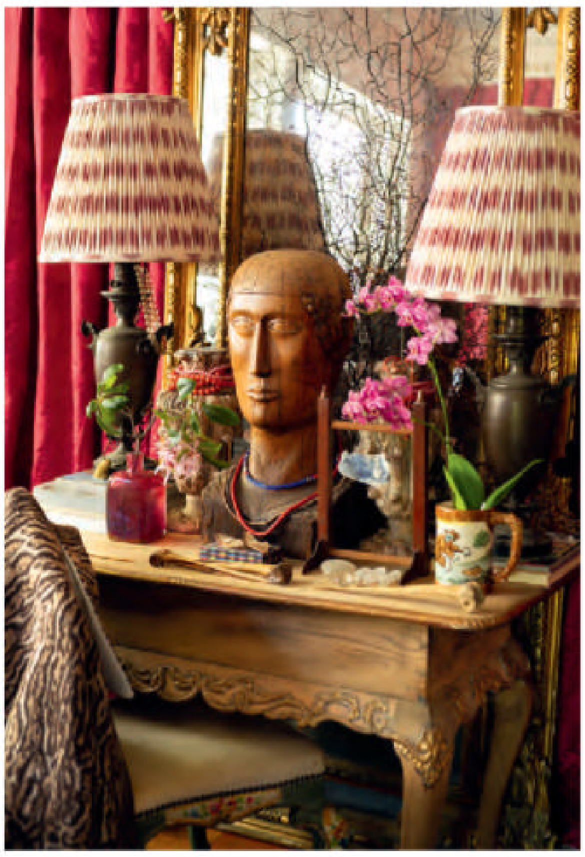
A STAR IS REBORN



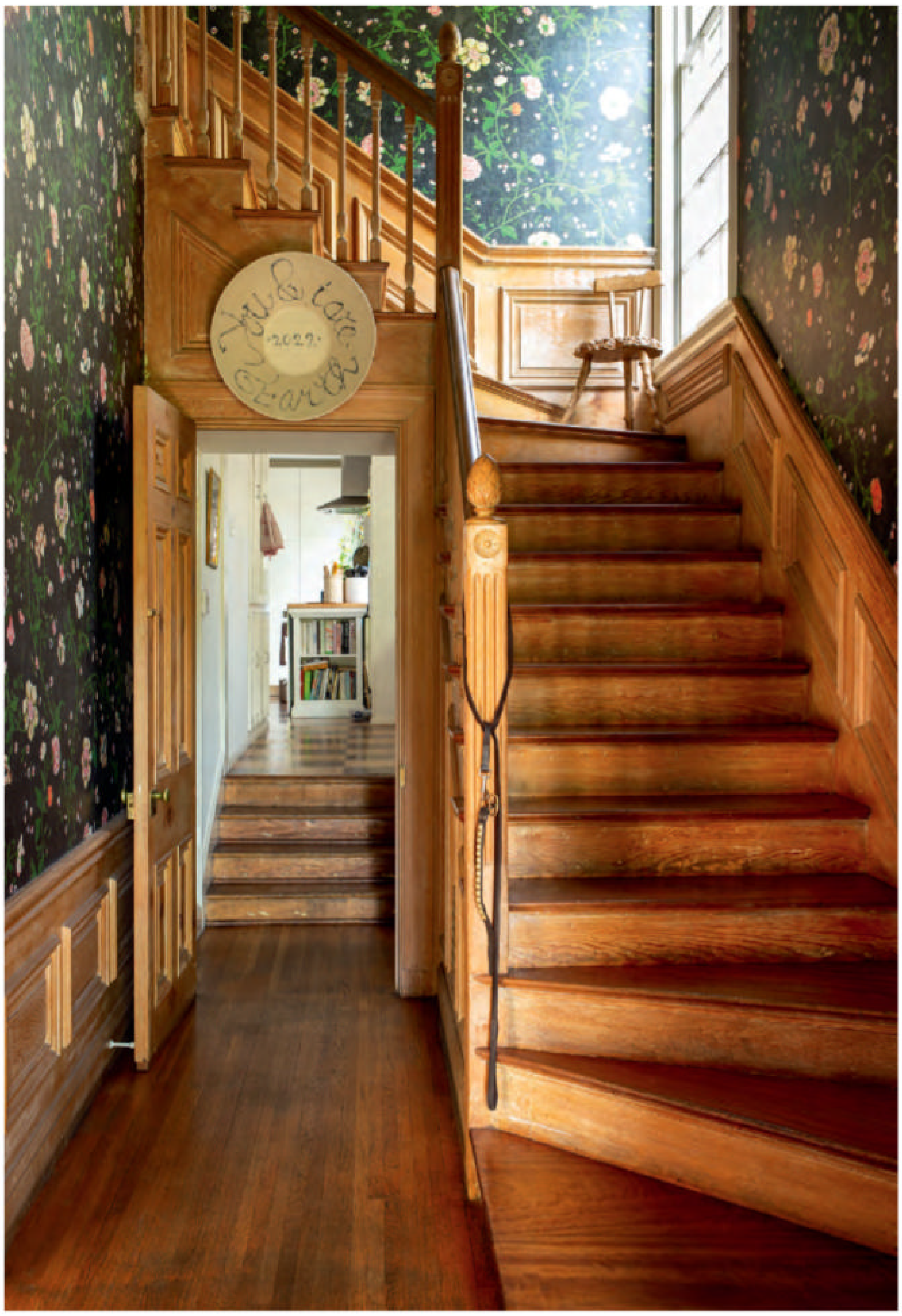
Previous pages: as a rule Matthias Vriens eschews coffee tables but made an exception for the one in his living room, which he has upholstered in an Indian block-print fabric. Close by is a 19th-century campaign chair – his very first antique purchase, made when he was a teenager. This page, top left: a Congolese lega passport mask and figure sit on the mantel. Left: a ceramic chicken, an example of early 20th-century American outsider art, has roosted alongside an African headrest. Above: William Haines, the property's erstwhile owner, strikes a pose on his daybed, which travelled everywhere with him

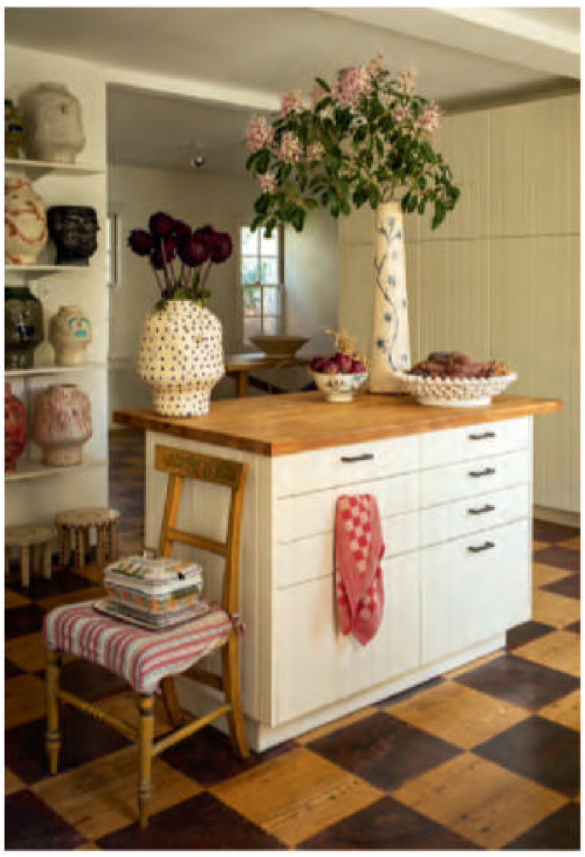
TOP RIGHT: RUTH HARRIET LOUISE. FROM THE CORE COLLECTION BIOGRAPHY FILES OF THE MARGARET HERRICK LIBRARY, ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

Below left: the backdrop to this archetypical Vriens vignette is a photographic collage by him called 'Angel'. He also designed the reading lamp, which has a shade of antique Indian cloth. Below right: a quartet of phallic mushroom collages frame a cloisonné lamp base topped with cashmere shade. The side table and chairs are c1915 Swedish, while the mohair-velvet sofa is an Atelier MVM creation

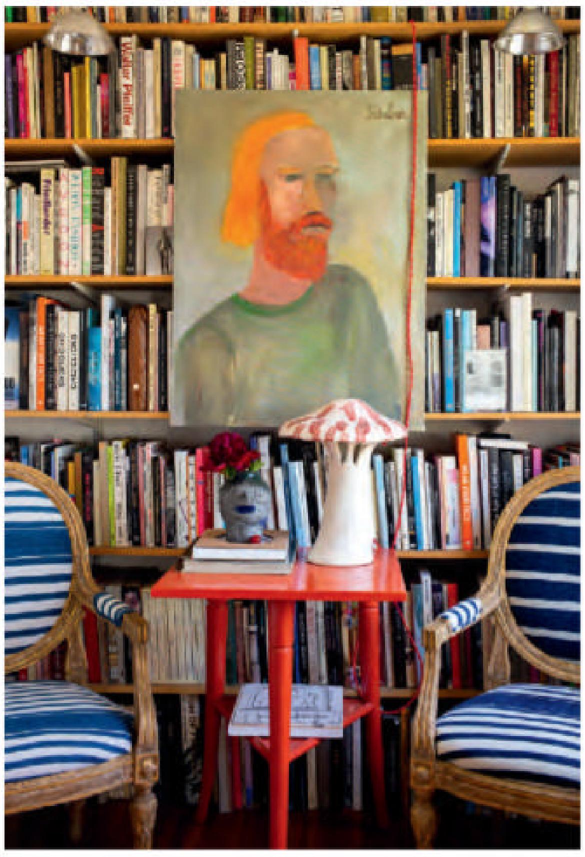


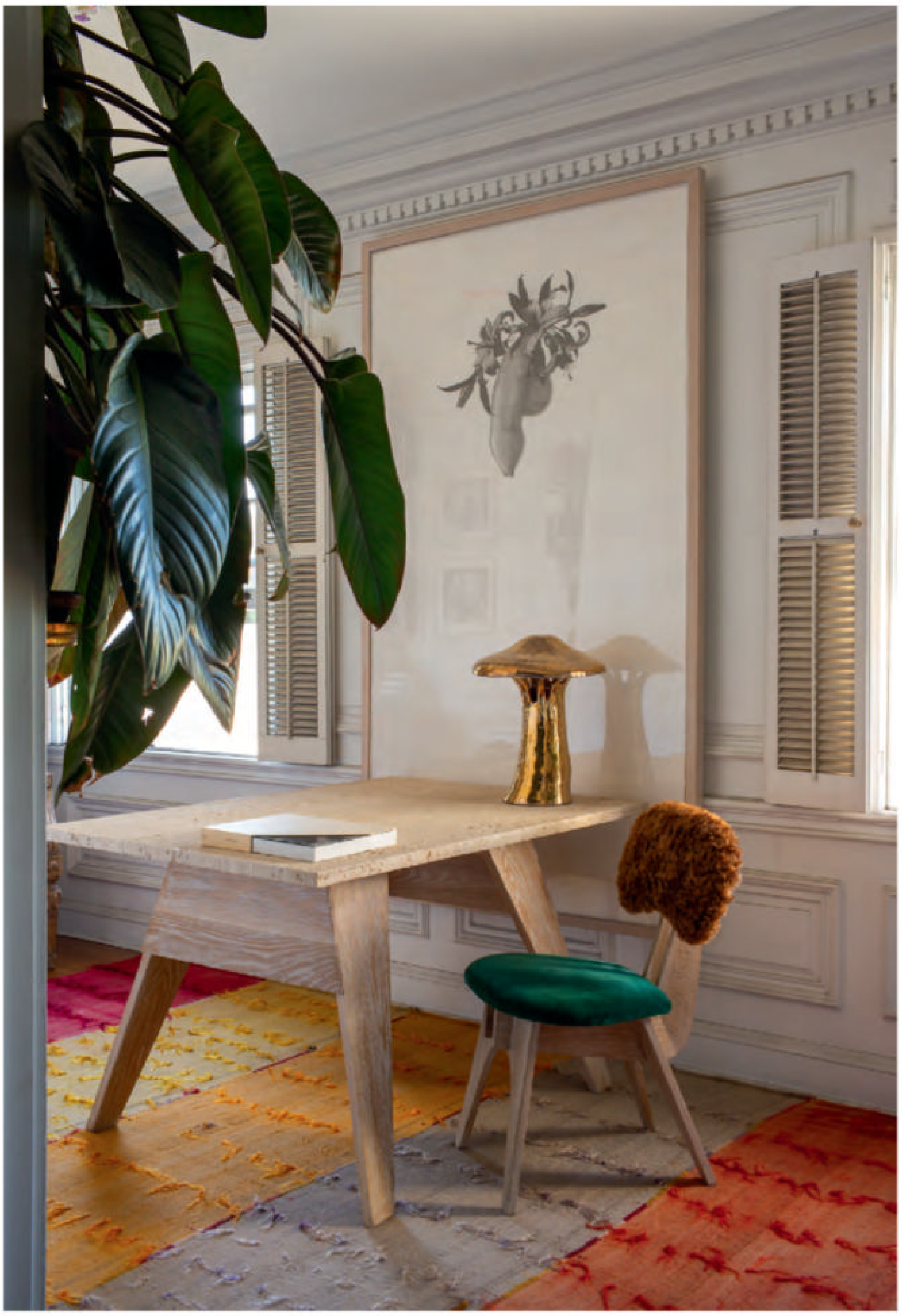
Opposite: the dining room largely functions as Vriens's office, though he's been known to host 30 or so guests there on occasion. In Haines's day the room was lined with Zuber wallpaper, but it's now draped with the same Lelièvre crimson damask that once graced the owner's flat on Paris's Ile de la Cité. The tablecloth is actually a Napoléon III curtain. This page, left: both table and bust are Swedish – the former 18th-century, the latter Art Deco. Bottom left: Matthias himself painted the faux-marble chequerboard kitchen floor. Below: the charger on the wall bears the words 'you & I are earth', inspired by a Medieval script

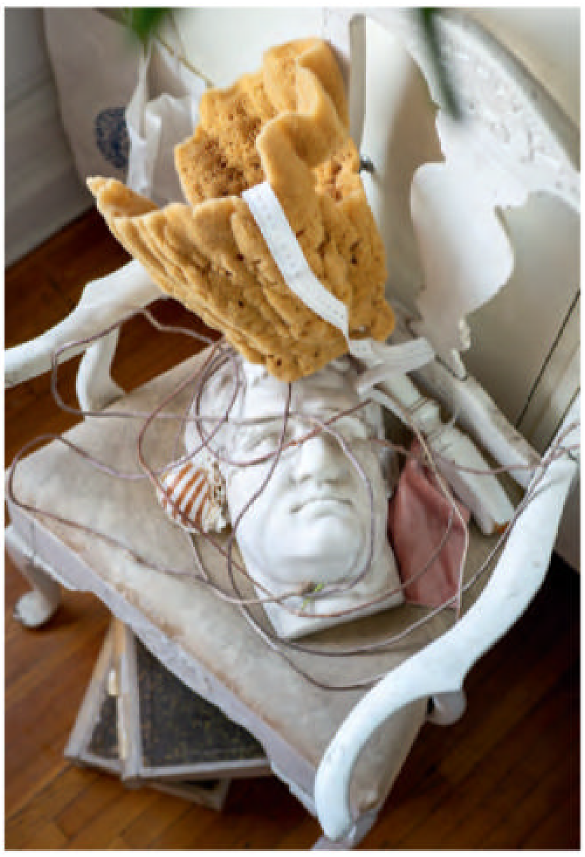




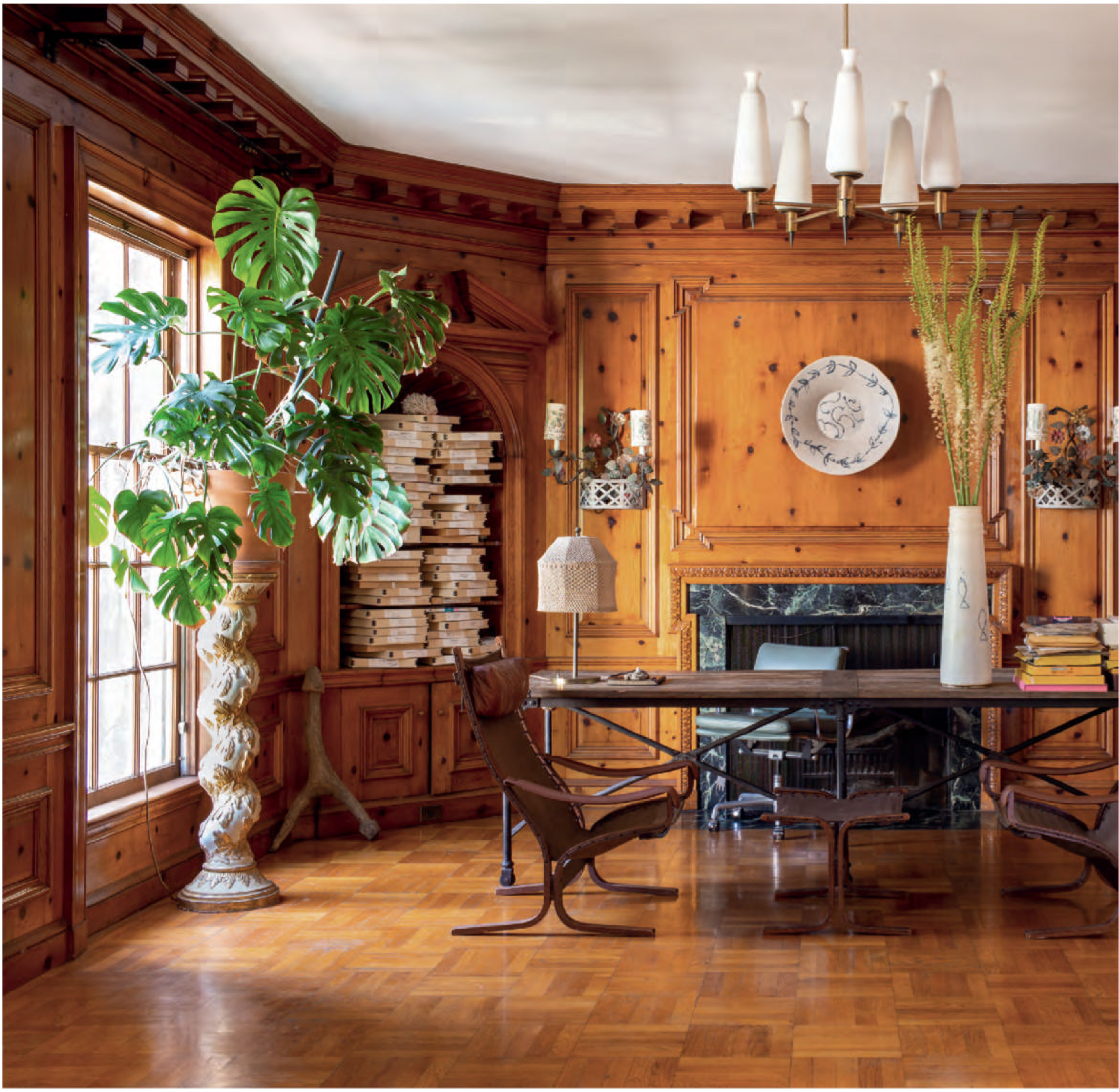
Charlotte







Opposite: a pair of Gustavian chairs from Galerie Half in Los Angeles flank a coquillage 'Grotto' table by Matthias. On the wall behind, a 19th-century shell clock hangs against Braquenié's 'Chinois Paravent Iris' paper. This page, clockwise from top left: the portrait is by the Expressionist artist Raymonde Désabres, a French émigrée living in America who was a member of the resistance during World War II; the golden 'Shroom' lamp, chair and oak-and-travertine table are all by Atelier MVM; Vriens proclaims the Ikea paper measuring tape seen in this assemblage on a Swedish chair 'one of my favourite things'



Above: some of Hollywood's top carpenters crafted the pine panelling, pediments, dentil cornice and rocaille alcoves for William Haines, who envisaged a Georgian manor as seen through the prism of Tinseltown. Now a studio, the room is furnished with French sconces of similar vintage to the former matinée idol's scheme, Ingmar Relling armchairs and a Restoration Hardware table. Opposite: 'Angel', a photograph taken by the owner in 1999, hangs at one end of the room, the subject's modesty preserved by a hand and a strategically placed plant. The bronze sculpture beneath, titled 'Priapus', is also the work of Vriens

Some 20 years ago, the Dutch-born photographer Matthias Vriens – a resident of Paris, Milan, Venice and Manhattan – found himself so frequently in Los Angeles for work that he decided to look for a home there. The former editor in chief of the groundbreaking 1990s fashion magazine *Dutch* eventually secured an apartment in an Art Deco building in the Chinese-temple style with high vaulted ceilings and went on to lacquer its walls and floors midnight black. He soon discovered that Janis Joplin had lived there before her death in 1970. Never mind six degrees of separation – in the close-knit world of LA real estate it's often just the one degree. On every street there is a property with some connection to show business or a rock-and-roll legend.

Over the years Vriens, who has also held high-level jobs at Giorgio Armani and Gucci in his time, realised he wanted more than an apartment and began looking for a house where he and his husband, Donovan McGrath, an in-demand yoga teacher, could settle with their dog, Shirley Brown, and indulge their love of gardening and entertaining. Quite apart from being an influential photographer and creative director, along the way Vriens has gained a name as a decorator too and worked on the homes of a number of clients. What's more, the objects he meticulously handmakes under the banner Atelier MVM have become increasingly sought-after among the cognoscenti.

The 1920s house that he and Donovan eventually found had it all – including another celebrity connection. Located just north of bustling Hollywood Boulevard, from 1926 to 1944 Haines Castle – as Tallulah Bankhead nicknamed it – had been the home of the actor turned interior decorator William Haines and Jimmie Shields, his partner of some 50 years. (Theirs was 'the happiest marriage in Hollywood', Joan Crawford, a friend, had once proclaimed.) Haines had paid $20,500 for the 420sq m house, which is draped in bougainvillea and has terraces thick with roses and jasmine, and with the help of the architect James Dolena opened it up to the Californian sunshine, adding windows as well as fireplaces and cornices.

Fifty years after his death, that famous former owner has proved to be a mentor rather than a ghostly presence for Vriens. 'When Billy Haines started decorating for a living, he had access to all the best and most creative set designers and set builders in Hollywood, and their work is all through this place,' he says. Delighted that previous occupants resisted the temptation to alter it, he has made few alterations to Haines's original footprint. He has turned one room into a work space, where he creates, among other things, his 'Mientjes' vases shaped like heads (named after his grandmother), shellwork or mushroom-shaped lamps, console tables, picture frames and chandeliers. Inspiration comes from the nautical-themed grottos and follies to be found in the Netherlands in the 18th century. 'I cover things in a very organic way,' Vriens says. 'It's almost as if the table or vases have slipped off an 18th-century ship, fallen into the ocean, and then naturally gotten encrusted with

creatures.' Until the pandemic these pieces were sold at his shop on Beverly Boulevard; now they're made to order.

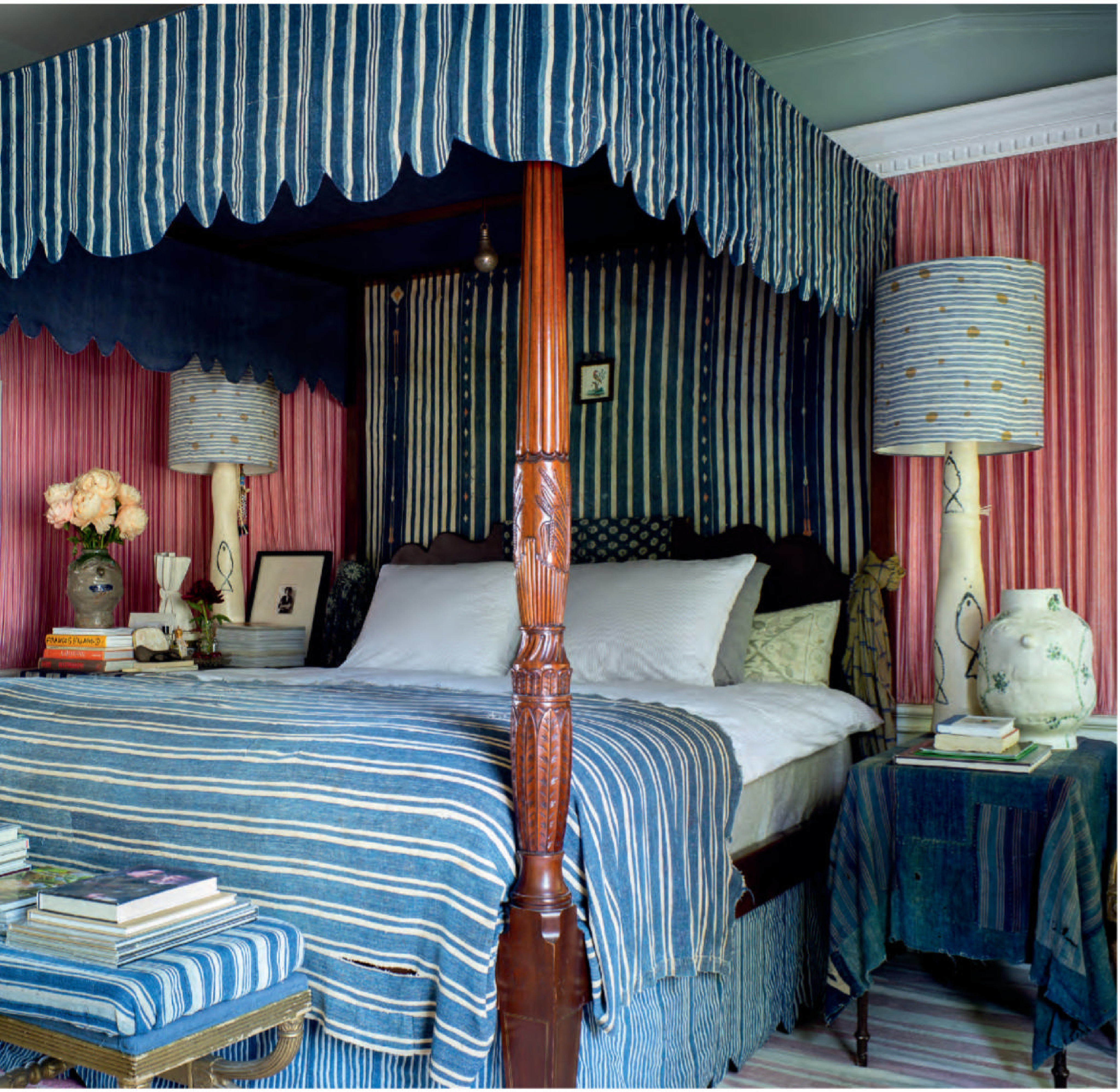
On the subject of Haines, Vriens is reminded just how hard-won his legacy of gracious living was. At the very height of the actor's career in 1930, Louis B. Mayer, sensing a new era of censorship and conservatism in the US, instructed him to cool his affair with Shields. He told him to be seen with women and to get married, just as Cary Grant had done when his relationship with Randolph Scott threatened to tarnish his reputation as a heterosexual leading man. Haines, however, refused; his studio contract wasn't renewed, and he found himself out of work, despite having invested heavily in an antique shop on La Brea Avenue near to where Charlie Chaplin had his studio. Fortunately, Joan Crawford stepped in. Convinced he had what it took to be a decorator, she hired Haines to do her house, and then other clients followed suit. He never looked back.

'Billy Haines invented Hollywood Regency,' Vriens says. A blend of English Tudor, Regency, Neo-Georgian and Spanish Colonial styles, with a dash of Robsjohn Gibbings for good measure, this 'architecture of glamour required the seemingly effortless balancing between the formal and the casual, as well as for well-placed exaggeration and well-chosen omission', design historian John Chase says in *Wisecracker*, William J. Mann's biography of Haines.

'The mouldings, the original ceilings, the fireplaces, the staircase were all untouched when we found this house. I had plenty of furniture in Europe I could bring here,' says Vriens, whose first, tentative venture into the world of interior design came when he was just 18. He'd been studying to be a classical ballet dancer but shattered his shin and calf bone in an accident. During his recovery, he began decorating mirrors in his Amsterdam apartment (*WoI* April 1994) with shells. When these took off he moved to Paris to work as a stylist on magazines, which led in turn to the editorship of *Dutch*, photography and, ultimately, the position of creative director for Giorgio Armani.

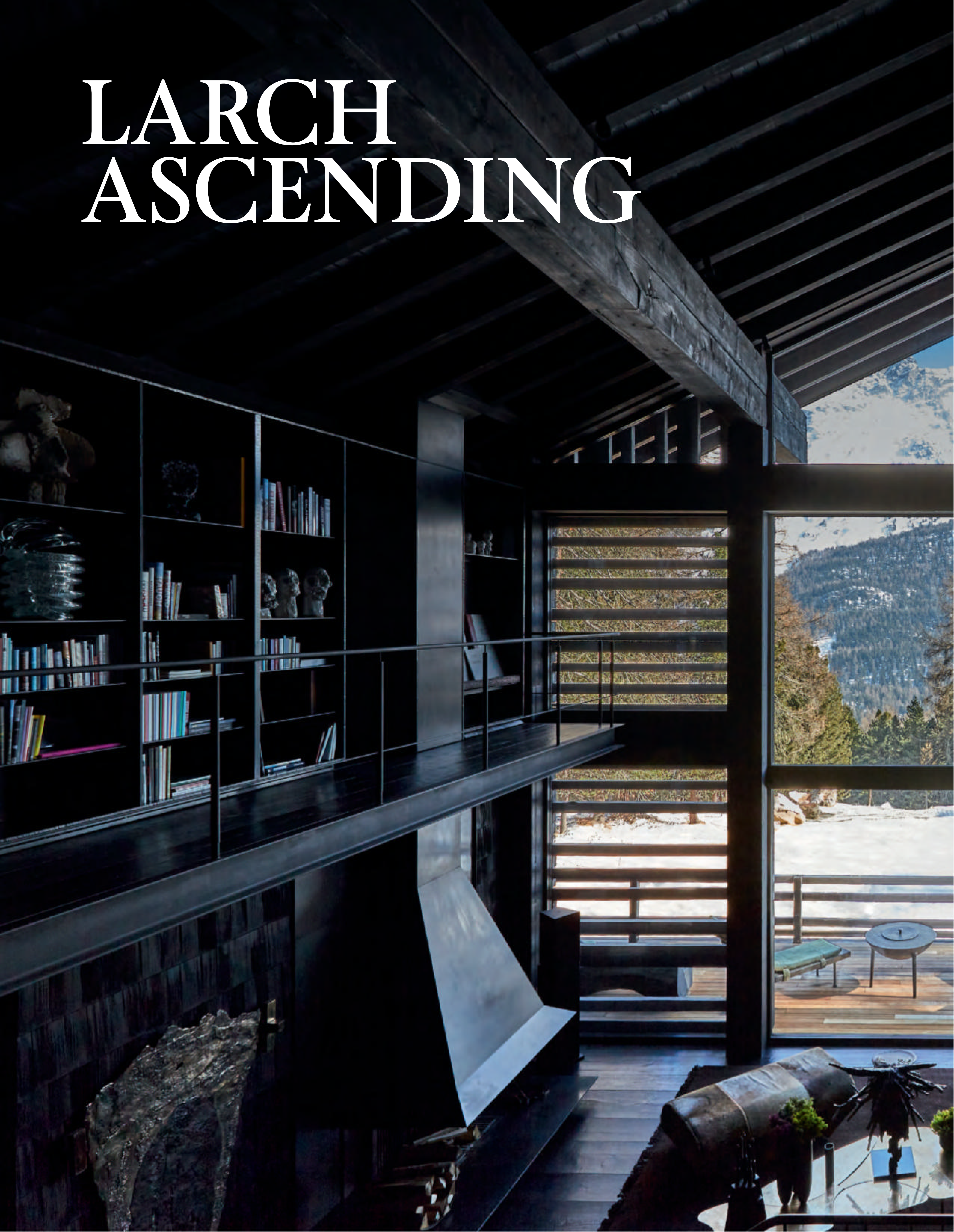
Vriens's only intervention has been to renovate and enlarge the kitchen. 'The rest was sanding floors, repainting and some wallpaper.' Haines had commissioned the Hungarian artist Paul Fehér to paint a series of risqué murals on the stairwell, vignettes of gazelles, Grecian women and armed centaurs, but sadly these hadn't survived the decades. To compensate, in their place Vriens has used a wallpaper by John Derian for Braquenié based on a 19th-century chinoiserie document.

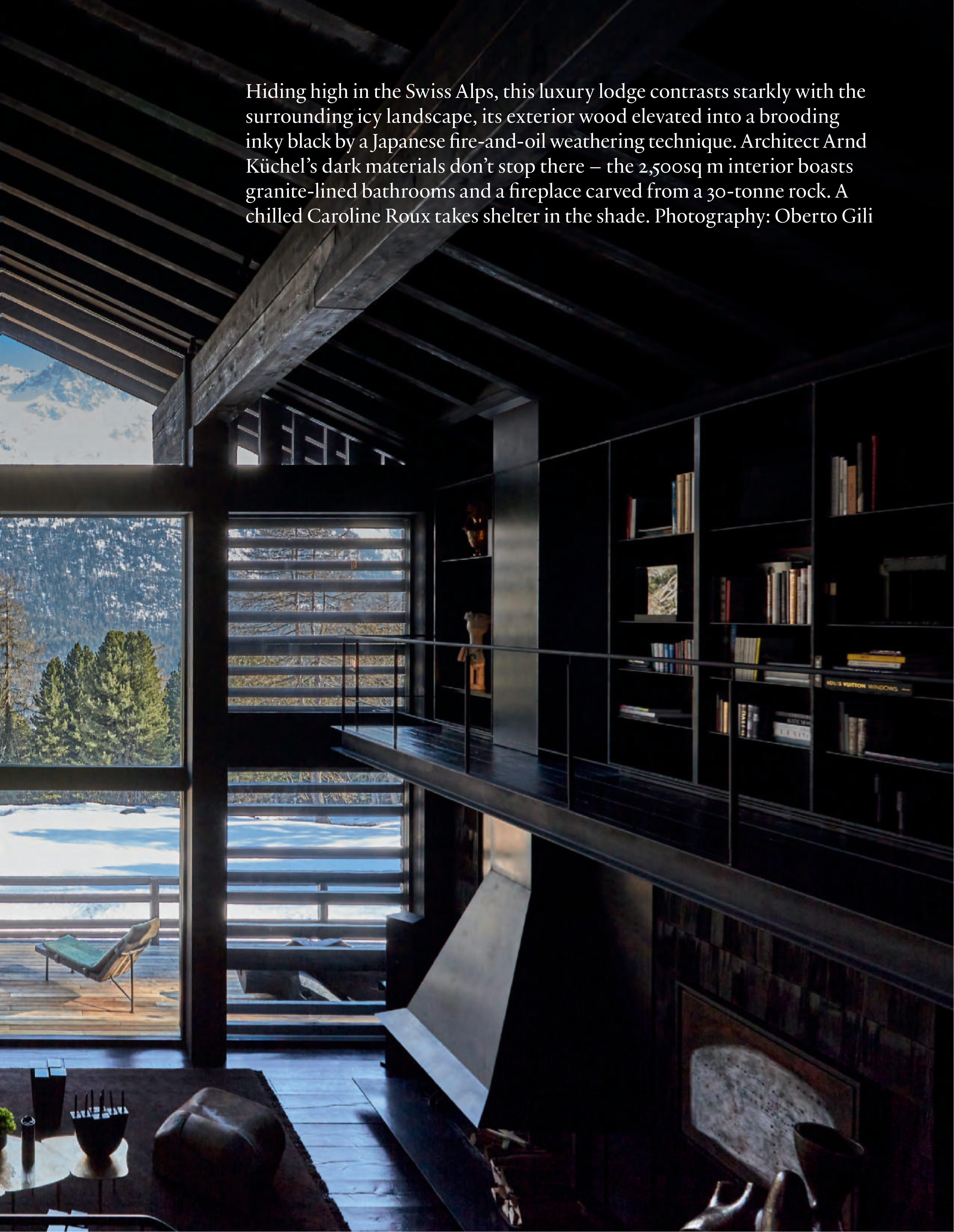
'My passions have always been fashion and interiors,' he says. 'Atelier MVM grows out of that. I want to make a mini universe of my passions that is available to others.' He pauses. Those passions and goals are not so very dissimilar to Billy Haines's, despite the fact that the two men are decades apart. Their homes are – this one house is – 'the combination of so many things. Possibly for anybody else it doesn't make sense, but this is my universe. This is where I am at home. This is my cocoon where I feel safe and where I thrive' ❀ *Matthias Vriens. Visit @ateliermvm*



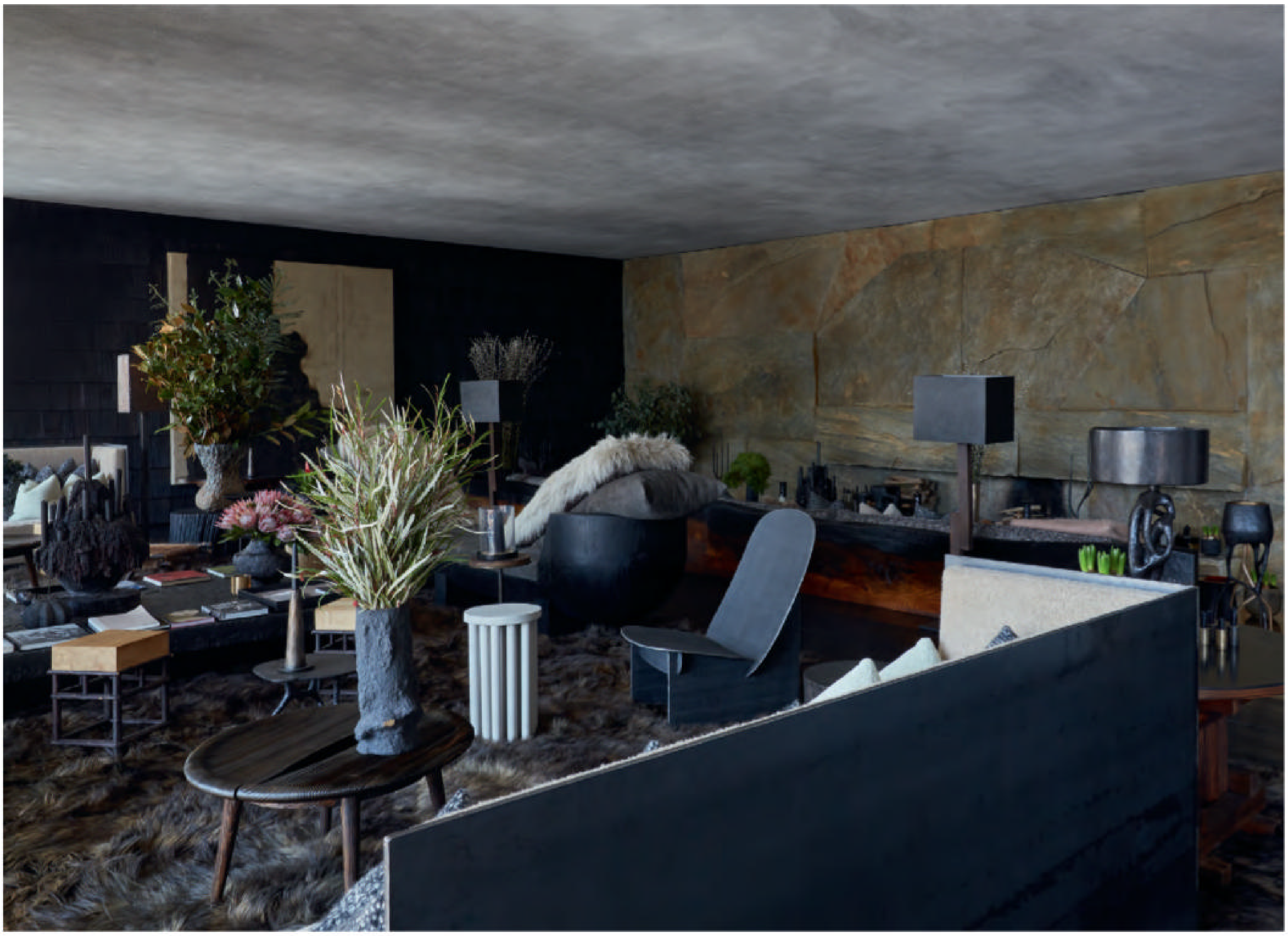
Opposite, from top: the pleated-fabric walls in Vriens's bedroom are a homage to Madeleine Castaing. He once lived in a building on Rue Jacob in Paris next to the grande dame of decorating; 19th-century oil lamps in the bathroom. Above: Haines himself loved a canopied bed. The current owner's is covered with 19th-century Indian jail dhurries, so called because they were made by prisoners. In fact, there's been a mass breakout of them here, as they also crop up on the floor, a Louis XVI fauteuil and an ottoman. Propped against the wall to the left of the four-poster is a Robert Mapplethorpe Polaroid of Patti Smith

LARCH ASCENDING





Hiding high in the Swiss Alps, this luxury lodge contrasts starkly with the surrounding icy landscape, its exterior wood elevated into a brooding inky black by a Japanese fire-and-oil weathering technique. Architect Arnd Küchel's dark materials don't stop there – the 2,500sq m interior boasts granite-lined bathrooms and a fireplace carved from a 30-tonne rock. A chilled Caroline Roux takes shelter in the shade. Photography: Oberto Gili



For many in search of a property in Switzerland's St Moritz – a ski resort high in the Engadin Alps and famed for its sheer fabulousness – the prize spots are all within throwing distance of its glittering frozen lake. It's far from the region's biggest stretch of water, but, ringed by mountains, it's perfectly formed. This icy arena is also the seat of the annual Snow Polo World Cup, which takes place in January or February: yet another fancy feather in the town's already chic cap.

One family, from the Italian lakes, had a different setting in mind. After years spent hunting for the perfect place to create their mountain home, they found it seven years ago: an exceptionally secluded 6,000sq m site, some feat in an area where, thanks to its desirability, houses are often squeezed in rather close together. 'We wanted trees and animals around us: to be in the forest,' says the owner, who also spends time in Milan, where her husband's luxury fashion label is based. 'In our home away from the city, we live right on the water, we open the windows and there it is. I have an incredible view of the mountains from my pilates reformer. I feel embedded in nature.'

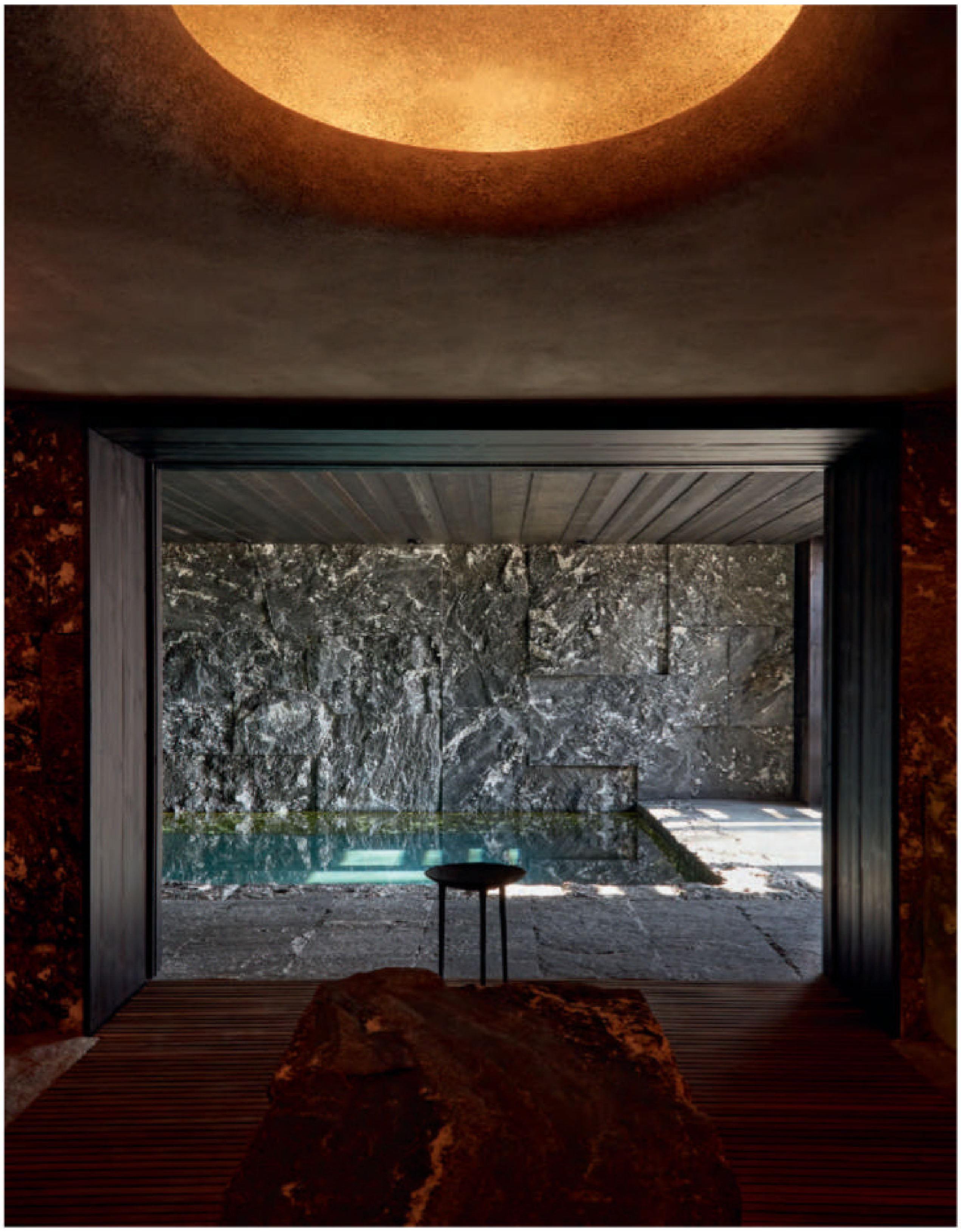
The family moved into the St Moritz house three years ago, but it wasn't their first home in the region. Their previous place, in nearby Champfèr, was like 'a big chicken coop', says the owner. If that sounds hard to imagine, their new creation is more extraordinary still: a 2,500sq m interior concealed under five small-scale roofs covered in wood shingle. 'It was the best way I could find to break up the scale,' says architect Arnd Küchel, who hails from the nearby Zuoz. 'Although we wanted to keep to the local rules of construction, we didn't want to do a normal chalet.'

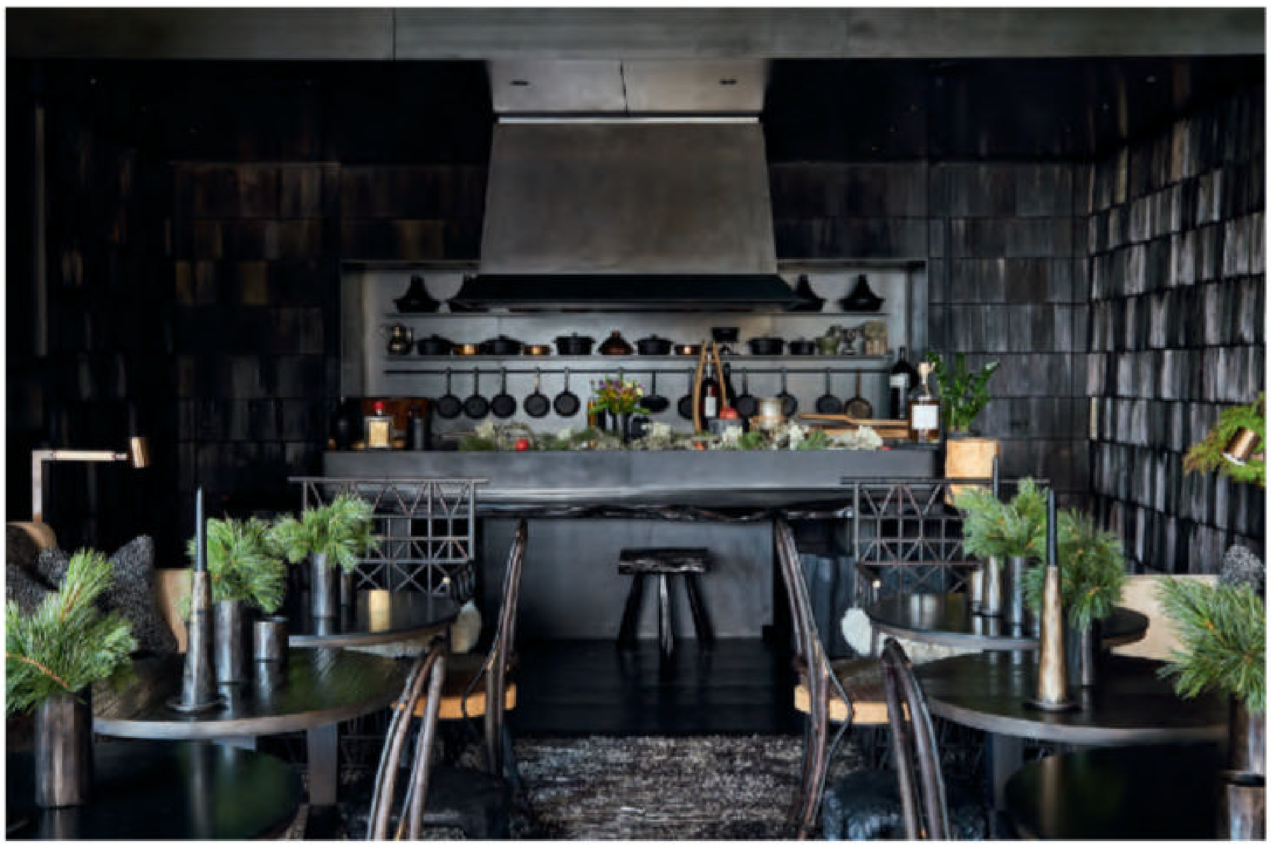
Normal it is not. While the house is constructed from larch, which is traditionally used in the Engadin both for its load-bearing qualities and natural resistance to the extremes of mountain weather, its exterior has been torched to an inky black – the signature of a Japanese wood-burning method. 'You burn it, and oil it, and burn, and oil it,' explains Küchel, who researched the technique thoroughly before teaching it to local workmen. And so the chalet sits, dark and brooding, among the pines.

The owners had encountered these charred exteriors on their many visits to Japan. Known as *shou sugi ban*, or *yakisugi*, the system was developed in the 18th century as a way to weather-proof Japanese cedar. Despite its historic roots, with its characteristic soft dark finish the effect could hardly appear more contemporary. 'We showed Arnd some pictures,' recalls

Previous pages: in the salon, the burnt-wood surfaces achieve a shock of chiaroscuro. Beside wall pieces by Theaster Gates, left, and Lucio Fontana, right, twin woodburners frame Rick Owens stools and a bust of Kuntermann, a forest guardian, by Christophe Charbonnel. Opposite: 'Hoho', a savage oil painting by Kazuo Shiraga, flanks a steel staircase. Top: helpfully fitted with display niches by architect Arnd Küchel, the salon teems with abstract works by the likes of Tony Marsh and Sonja Ferlov Mancoba. Sittings editor: Gianluca Longo

Opposite: the chalet's entrance hall is hung with textural pieces, drawing to the fore Küchel's innovative use of wooden shingles – typically affixed to outside walls – across much of the house's interior cladding. To the left, two nail-on-board works by Günther Uecker add further striking relief, while one of Alberto Burri's singed plastic paintings rhymes with its flame-treated surroundings. Beneath it, a chair by Rick Owens boasts a carved antler. Right: the spa's monumental far wall, richly bespeckled with white quartz inclusions, was built from granite quarried in a nearby valley. The architect was pleased to discover that, 'when polished, it looks like mountains in the snow'. Bottom: the show kitchen is a forest of trimmed pine and rustic wrought chestnut chairs by Christian Astuguevieille. The black central stool is by Max Lamb



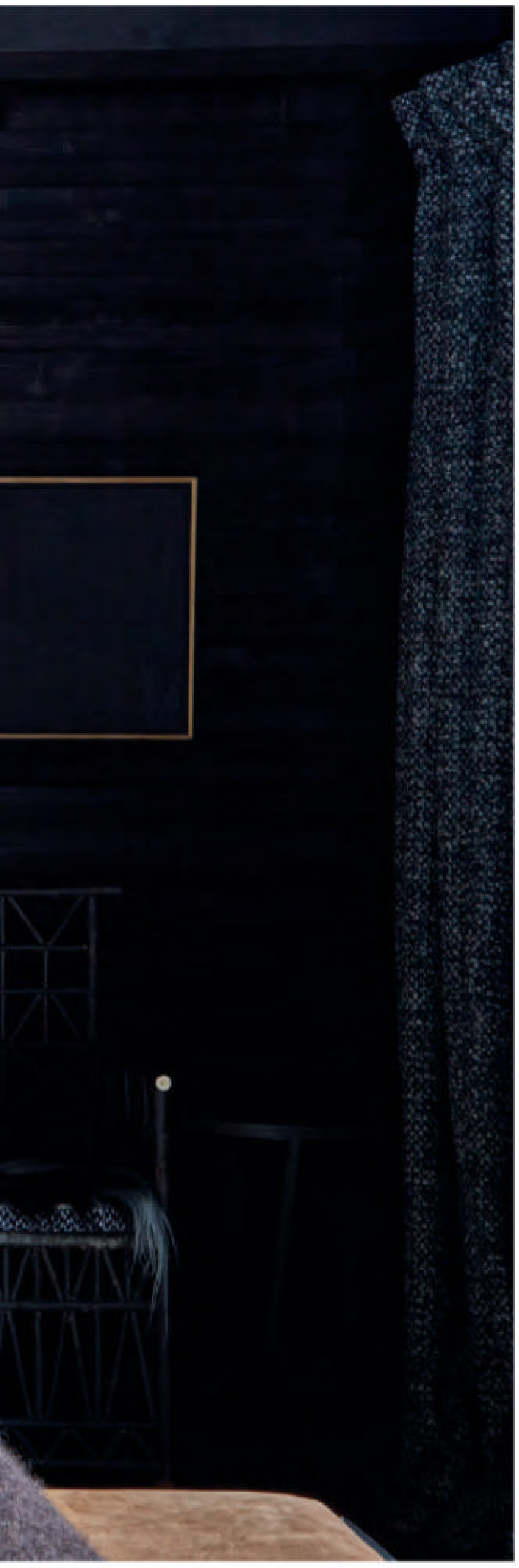


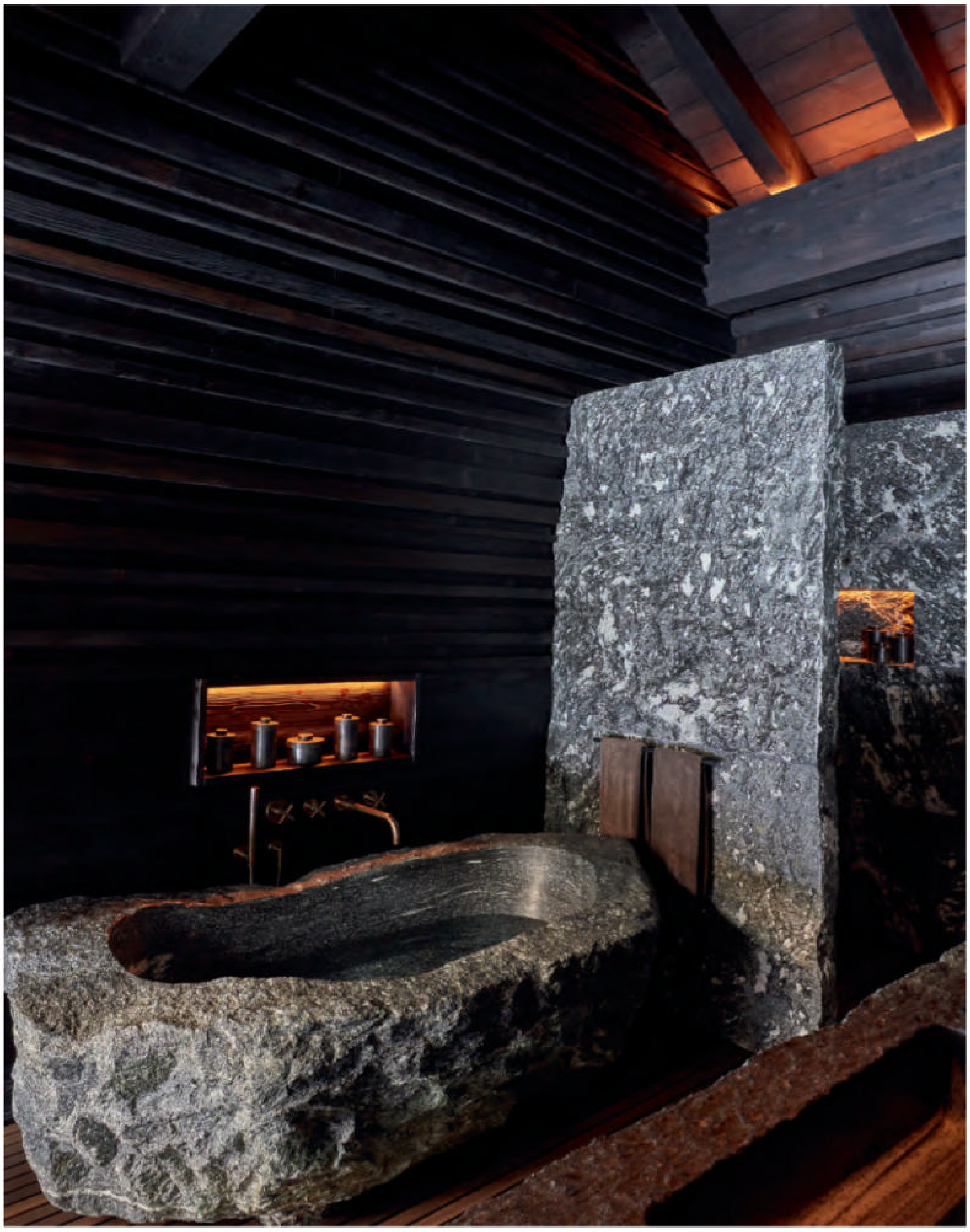
the owner. 'He's quite a low-key person as a rule, but he became very excited. I think the result is really unexpected and beautiful. The first time I saw it, I was just amazed. The classic chalet is quite boring, and we wanted a bit of Brutalism.'

For all that he is local, Arnd Küchel has embraced the cosmopolitan climate that now defines St Moritz. He has taken up commissions in the area for a number of glamorous clients, all the while supporting projects for international names, including Norman Foster. 'Growing up in the Engadin, you have a great respect for nature, and what it can offer, and for tradition,' he says. 'But you adapt that to new ways of thinking and designing. In every project, I create at least one new idea.'

Among his big ideas is the vast living area: according to his clients' wishes, he's brought the torched exterior right inside. 'In the 50s and 60s, a lot of houses here had dark-painted interiors,' he says. 'It was only in the 90s we started taking those colours away.' Entering through the front door and down a steel staircase, visitors find themselves in a cavernous ten-metre-high space, which leads, in one direction, to a terrace and a spectacular mountain view, and to an expansive kitchen in another. The ceiling, equally, is finished in a render normally used for outside walls, made from sand and stones taken from the local river. 'It's not luxurious, but it is difficult to make,' explains Küchel. 'This is the first time I've brought it inside.' The walls of the reception area are finished in fine wooden shingles: another testament to the architect's love of 'using materials in

Top: in the chalet's intimate principal bedroom, two more works by experimental painter Alberto Burri take centre stage. The piece nearest the room's bouclé curtains hangs above another of Christian Astuguevieille's chestnut chairs, this time a fauteuil





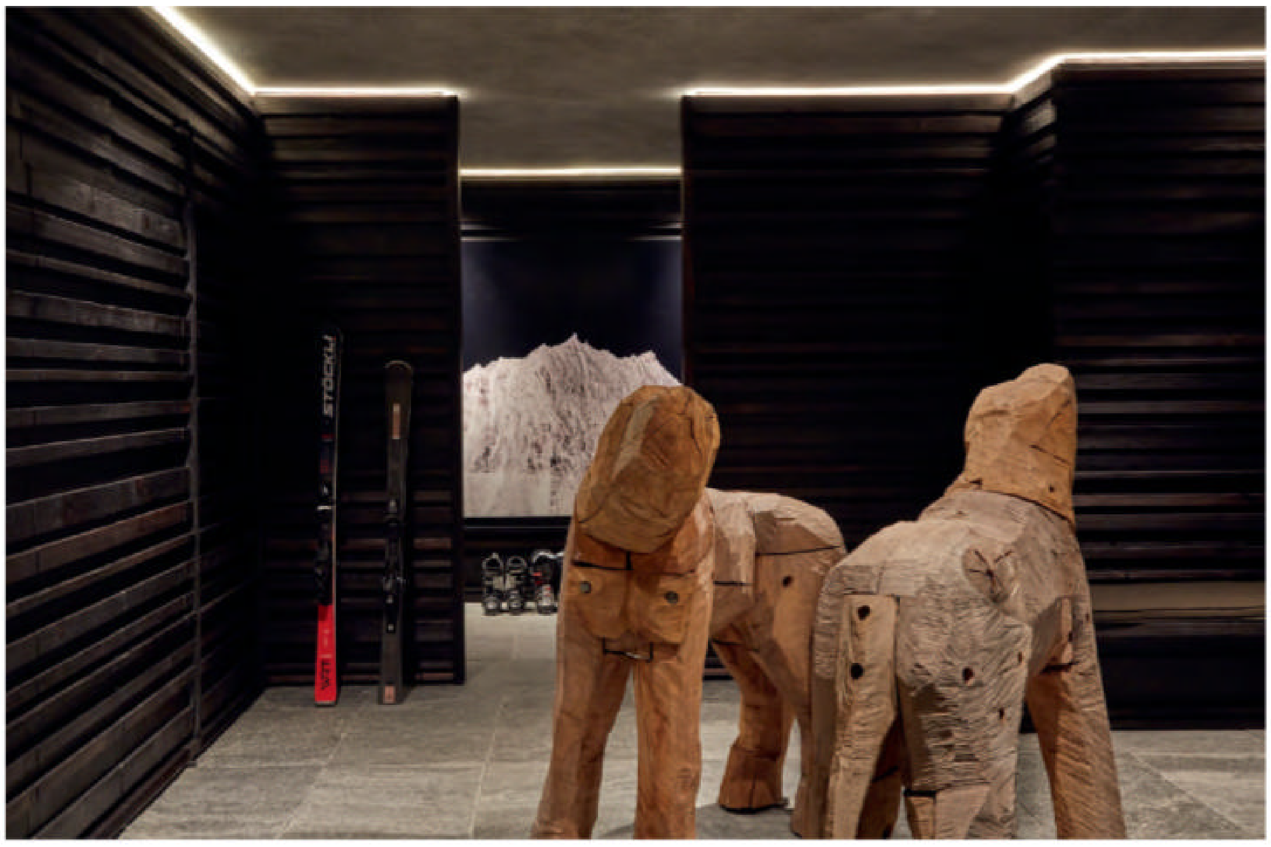
unexpected ways'. The fireplace is carved from one 30-tonne piece of stone; the outdoor jacuzzi from a single rock. 'They are from the local valleys, carefully sourced.'

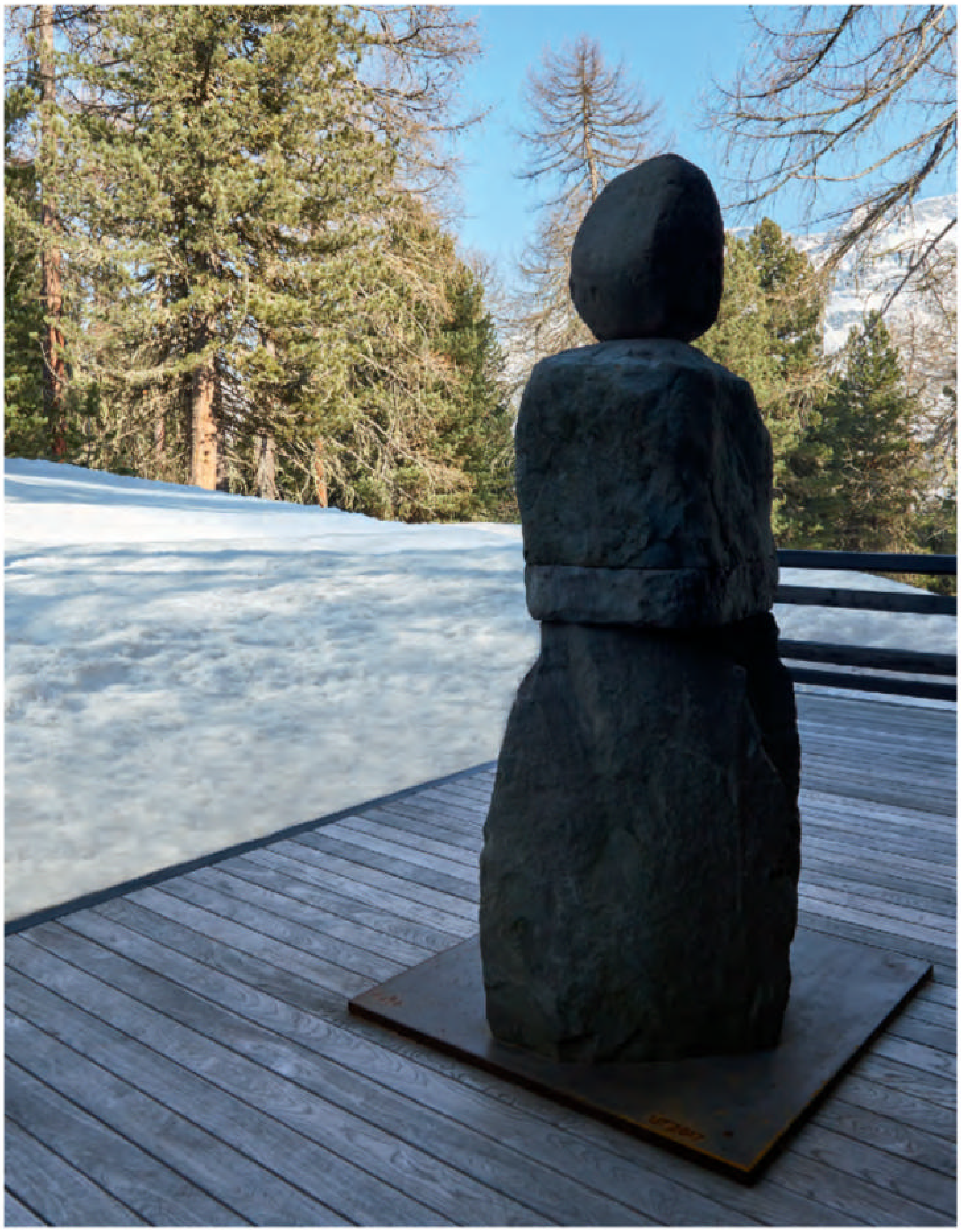
Though the salon is full of furnishings crafted by the architect, the owners' tastes are fully on display. Shelves are lined with exquisite Japanese ceramics. There are five bronze occasional tables commissioned from their friend, Massimiliano Locatelli. 'They are in the shape of Engadin lakes,' explains the owner. 'The project took a year: they are completely unique.' Each rests on an undercarriage of wooden branches. The walls are lined with dazzling paintings by Kazuo Shiraga, and the Austrian fashion designer-turned-artist Helmut Lang; chairs by Rick Owens sprout antlers. 'Michèle Lamy – Rick's wife – is a very dear friend,' the owner says. (Such a good friend that they threw a party for her here with 300 people.) A coal-and-stainless-steel sculpture of a mountain comes from another friend, the aristocratic Swiss artist Not Vital. It's displayed with Arte Povera works from Jannis Kounellis and Alberto Burri, and a set of *urushi* lacquer furniture by Max Lamb.

What visitors won't see are the seven bedrooms and their bathrooms, lined in dark granite with white quartz inclusion. Nor will they witness the heavy curtains in every bedroom, made from the bouclé wool you might more expect to see in a Chanel coat. 'I love bouclé,' says the owner. 'When you use it like this, it's fantastic. It has so much weight, it becomes quite brutal.' Another perfectly arresting element in a mind-bending mountain home ⊛

Top right: the bedroom's adjoining bathroom is another love letter to local granite, all sourced, as in the spa, from the same nearby Alpine quarry. The bath was made out of a single huge piece of the veined rock, hollowed out and polished at its centre

Opposite, bottom right: the music room is wrapped, ceiling and all, with Schumacher's 'Josephine' wallpaper. Fabric in the same design covers the sofa, which bears a whole army of cushions from John Derian and faces a pair of tub chairs designed by Andrée Putman for th Opposite, bottom right: the music room is wrapped, ceiling and all, with Schumacher's 'Josephine' wallpaper. Fabric in the same design covers the sofa, which bears a whole army of cushions from John Derian and faces a pair of tub chairs designed by Andrée Putman

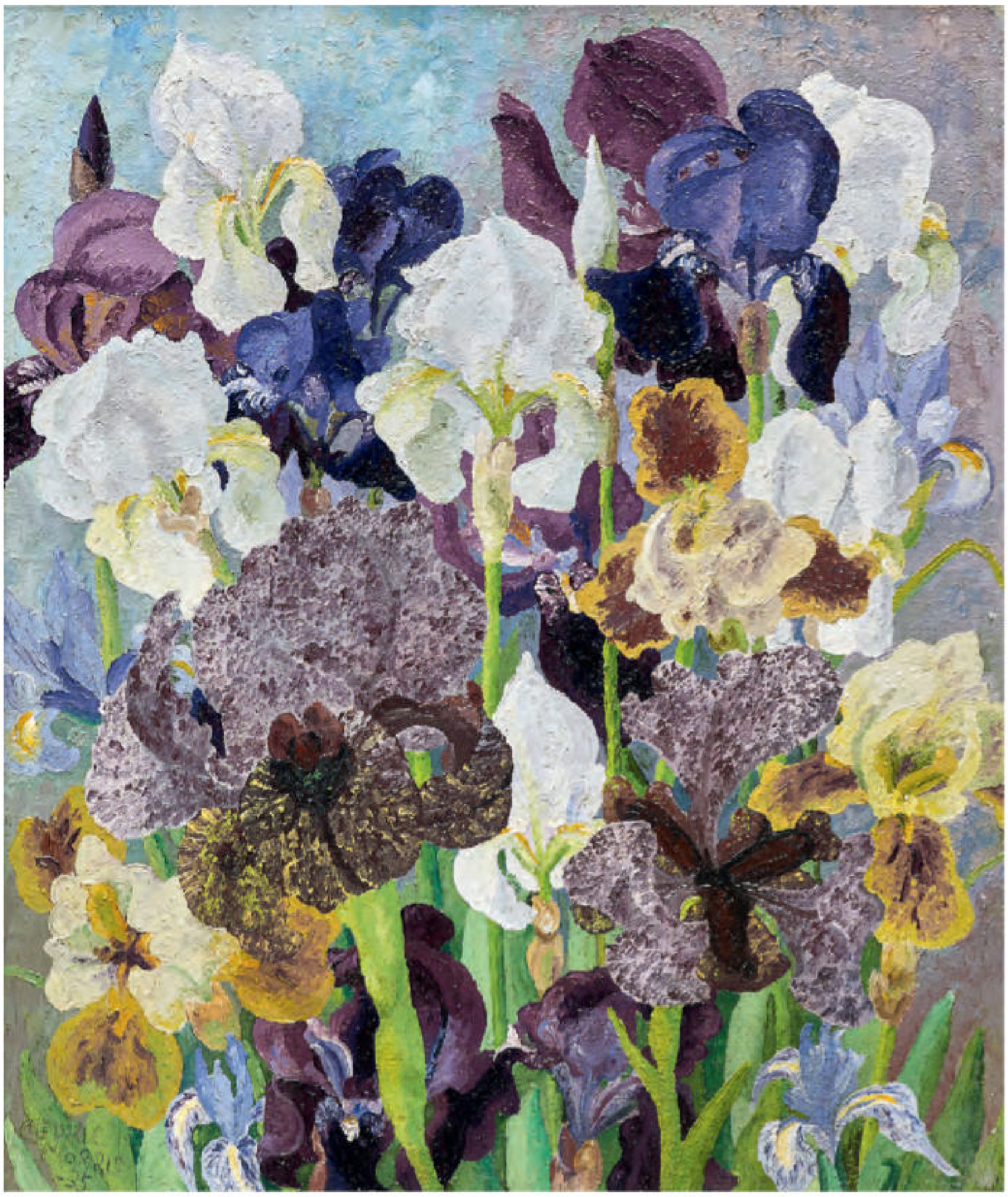




Opposite: 'Tongue' by Not Vital points defiantly skyward in an alcove beside a stairwell. This page, top: the sparse ski room plays host to two encircling wooden animal sculptures, both by Cyrille André. Right: 'The Sensible', an abstract bluestone and stainless-steel sculpture by Ugo Rondinone, feels perfectly of a piece with the landscape, marking the threshold between the mountains and the chalet's dining-room terrace

THE BORDERS OF BOHEMIA

After the artist Cedric Morris bought 16th-century Benton End in Suffolk, the place soon became renowned for its highly colourful gatherings and garden. Indeed, the latter easily matched the former for sheer flamboyance, with flower-beds in an aptly painterly palette serving as a canvas for the countless varieties of bearded iris he bred. Where else offered such dazzling displays of rhizomes and raffishness, asks Olivia Laing. Photography: Tim Walker



Previous pages, left: a languid Cedric Morris is captured in a hammock in a late 1920s photograph by the wood engraver Vivien Gribble. Right: an enormous 'Cistus purpureus' has colonised one corner of the garden at Benton End. These pages, left: Morris painted 'May Flowering Irises No 2', an oil on canvas, in 1935. Opposite: of the many forms of bearded iris he cultivated, 'Benton Olive' from 1949 has to be one of the most distinctive. In all, he named 90 varieties, which he bred from seed. Sittings editor: Tania Compton

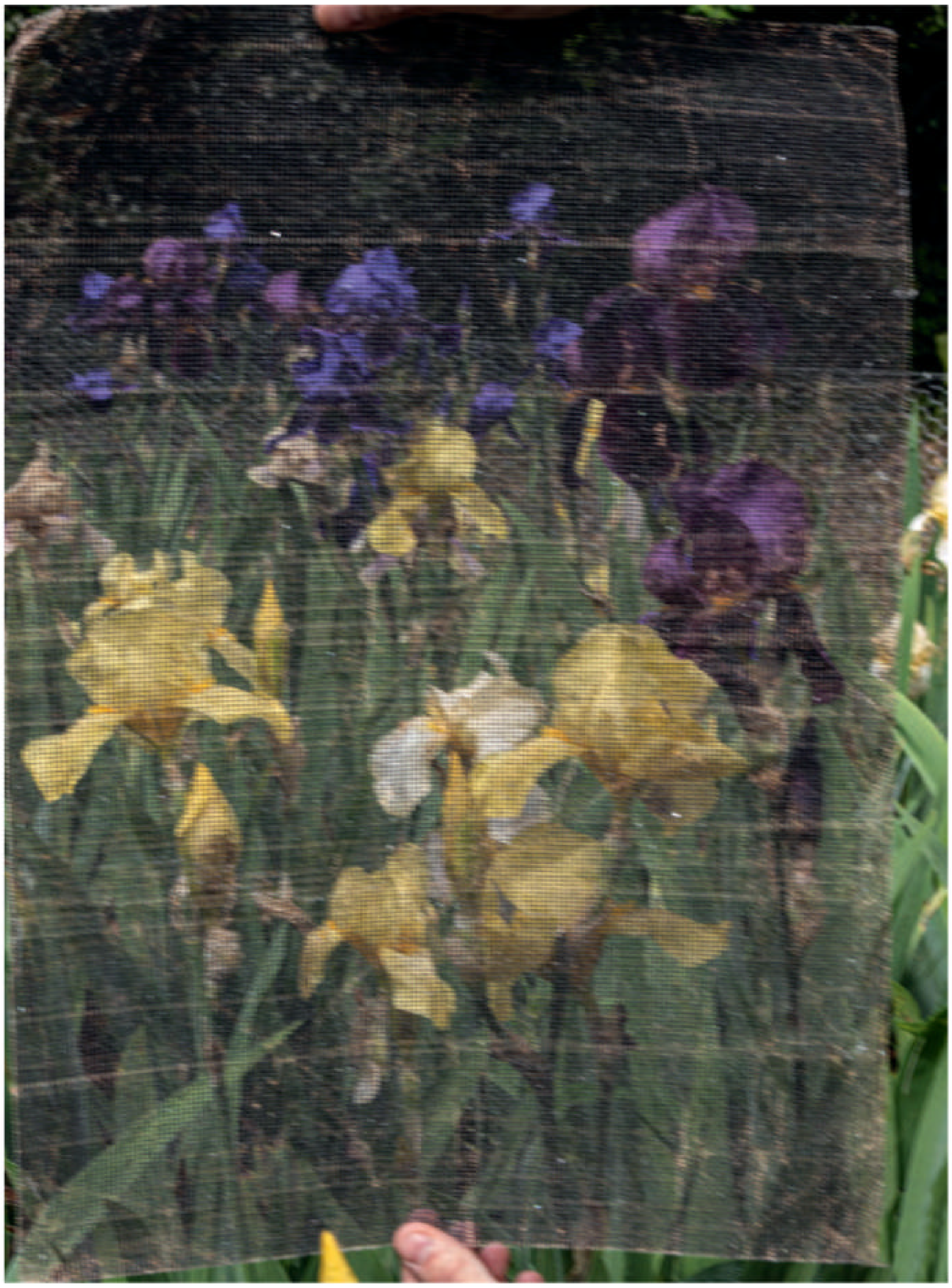
I went to Benton End in April last year, to visit Cedric Morris's ghosts. It's set low in a Suffolk river valley, on the outskirts of Hadleigh. The lovely, sprawling Tudor house was empty, and we had to turn on the electricity to make our coffee. It was a hot morning. The irises were sunning themselves against a wall, gearing up for flowering, and from an upstairs window we could see a queue of bees, vanishing through a secret hole in the herringbone brick.

The painter/plantsman first came here in the summer of 1939, with his lover and companion, the artist Arthur Lett-Haines, who was known invariably as Lett. The pair had been running a small and decidedly unorthodox art school, the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing, in nearby Dedham. Earlier that summer it had burned down, and they were in search of new premises, large enough to accommodate students and where Cedric could make a garden.

Over the years a mass of students and visitors came and went, among them Beth Chatto, Lucian Freud, Ronald Blythe and Maggi Hambling. It was strange to sit in a kitchen I'd read so much about. In Gwynneth Reynolds's *Benton End Remembered*, it's a site of fascination, as much for its prodigious squalor as for the extraordinary food and people you might encounter. The conversation was so bohemian, so cosmopolitan and wicked, that one visitor described it as 'almost like stepping into a novel'. Lett claimed he'd taught his friend Elizabeth David to cook. He presided over the filthy Aga, wine glass in hand, complaining vigorously. 'The buggers don't know what they're eating,' Maggi Hambling once heard him say. 'They might as well have ham sandwiches.' Instead, he magicked up elaborate fish stews and fruit jellies, even in the years of rationing. 'Chinese fare and coffee-chocolate blancmange for lunch,' one student wrote wonderingly in 1945: 'Lett certainly can cook!'

PREVIOUS PAGES, LEFT: COURTESY SARAH COOK

Opposite: with its gentle lilac splash on the falls (the lower petals that hang down), 'Benton Olive' epitomises Morris's knack for subtle, offbeat colours. Right: the soft yellow of 'Benton Apollo' contrasts with the intense purple-blue of 'Benton Nigel' and red-violet of 'Benton Menace' in this photograph on canvas of one of the borders at the garden. 'Menace' is named after one of the painter's cats, while 'Nigel' commemorates Nigel Scott, Cedric's lover as well as a fellow plantsman, who died tragically young of a fever while they were both on a botanical expedition in the Canary Islands



Both men struck the eye. Lett was six foot tall with a scarred shaved head, while Cedric dressed like an elegant tramp in cords, a dandyish red kerchief knotted round his neck befitting of a socialist baronet. Together, the two men built a paradise, an open-minded enclave of hedonism and hard work. As Ronald Blythe put it: 'Lett and Cedric were open about their homosexuality at a time when it was illegal to have such a relationship and they also conducted a fight against the philistinism of the day… The greatest crime at Benton End was to be boring!'

Cedric was a passionate gardener, while Lett could rarely be persuaded to step outside, preferring to spend his afternoons in bed, recuperating with champagne and sandwiches in a tin from the arduous work of keeping house and school motoring along. After the war, Cedric transformed the three-acre walled garden into an astounding plantsman's eden, filled with rarities he collected each winter in Europe. Beth Chatto, a lifelong friend, remembered a garden like nothing she'd seen before. This wasn't the traditional beds-plus-lawn arrangement, but instead 'a bewildering, mind-stretching, eye-widening canvas of colour, texture and shapes, created primarily with bulbous and herbaceous plants'. There were species roses and hellebores, great drifts of fritillaries and alliums, abundant poppies in a strange greyish-mauve like a rain-cloud, alpine strawberries, tree peonies and pear trees hung with fat cumuli of blossom. Sometimes you would find

Opposite: 'Benton Susan', bred in 1946, bears standards of a deep buff-yellow, white falls that are edged with the same colour, and orange beards. This page, below: Morris's iris beds are seen here in a photograph from the pages of 'Country Life' in 1946. In the month of June, he would host 4pm iris parties, serving tea and rock cakes to guests such as Vita Sackville-West and Beth Chatto

Cedric in a flower bed, curled like a cat and fast asleep.

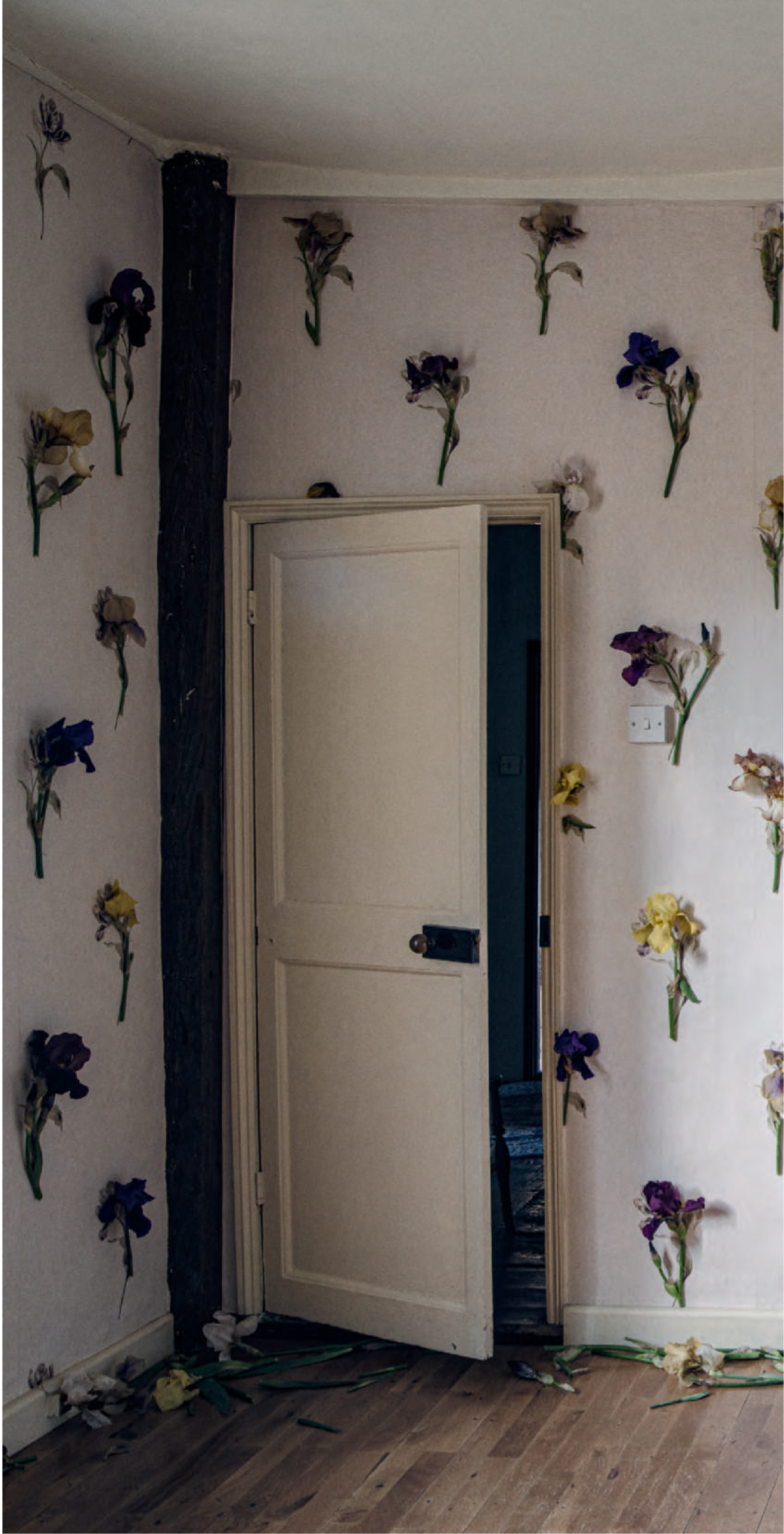
This exuberance and disarray is preserved in his paintings. Cedric was above all a colourist, creating sensuous, hallucinatory configurations of vegetal forms, composed almost naively in clean, glowing slabs of different hues. His flowers are recognisable not just as species but as individuals, sharing with his human portraits the same curious mixture of intensity and reticence. He loved to bring opposing colours into seductive, unsettling intimacy: ripe orange alongside imperial purple, the sharp yellow of crown imperials combined with the acidic green of *Euphorbia characias*.

The iris was his most prized plant, and after the 1950s, when his paintings drifted out of fashion, he was far better known as a breeder of bearded irises than as an artist. Each year he raised one thousand seedlings of his own crosses, breeding for subtlety of colour and perfection of form. Nicholas Moore's 1956 bible, *The Tall Bearded Iris*, describes the Benton irises as 'notable not only for their substance but also for the characteristic delicacy and artistry of their markings'.

The petals of *Iris plicata* are lined with fine veins of colour; Morris's gift as a colourist brought innovations of exquisite understatement and sophistication. At his height, there were around 90 named Benton varieties, and thanks to the work of Sarah Cook, the former head gardener at Sissinghurst, many have been rediscovered. They have delicious names: 'Benton Apollo', 'Benton Nigel', 'Benton Menace', 'Benton Farewell', the last of the lineage before Cedric's eyesight failed. My own favourite, 'Benton Olive', has a ground of palest greenery-yallery. The falls are marked with a delicate net of purple, growing darker at the throat. Like all the Benton irises, it appears to glow. Oscar Wilde could have worn it in his buttonhole.

Lett died in 1978; Cedric in 1982. For a long time Benton End was in private ownership, but it is now in the care of the Garden Museum. When I visited, the museum's head gardener, Matt Collins, was coming to the end of a year in residence. It was he who told me about Cedric's ghosts. Before his death, the painter appointed a designated plant executor to disperse the contents of the garden. The space we were wandering around was nothing like the magical tapestry that Beth Chatto witnessed. But there were ghostly remnants, revenants that had survived the long regime of mowers.

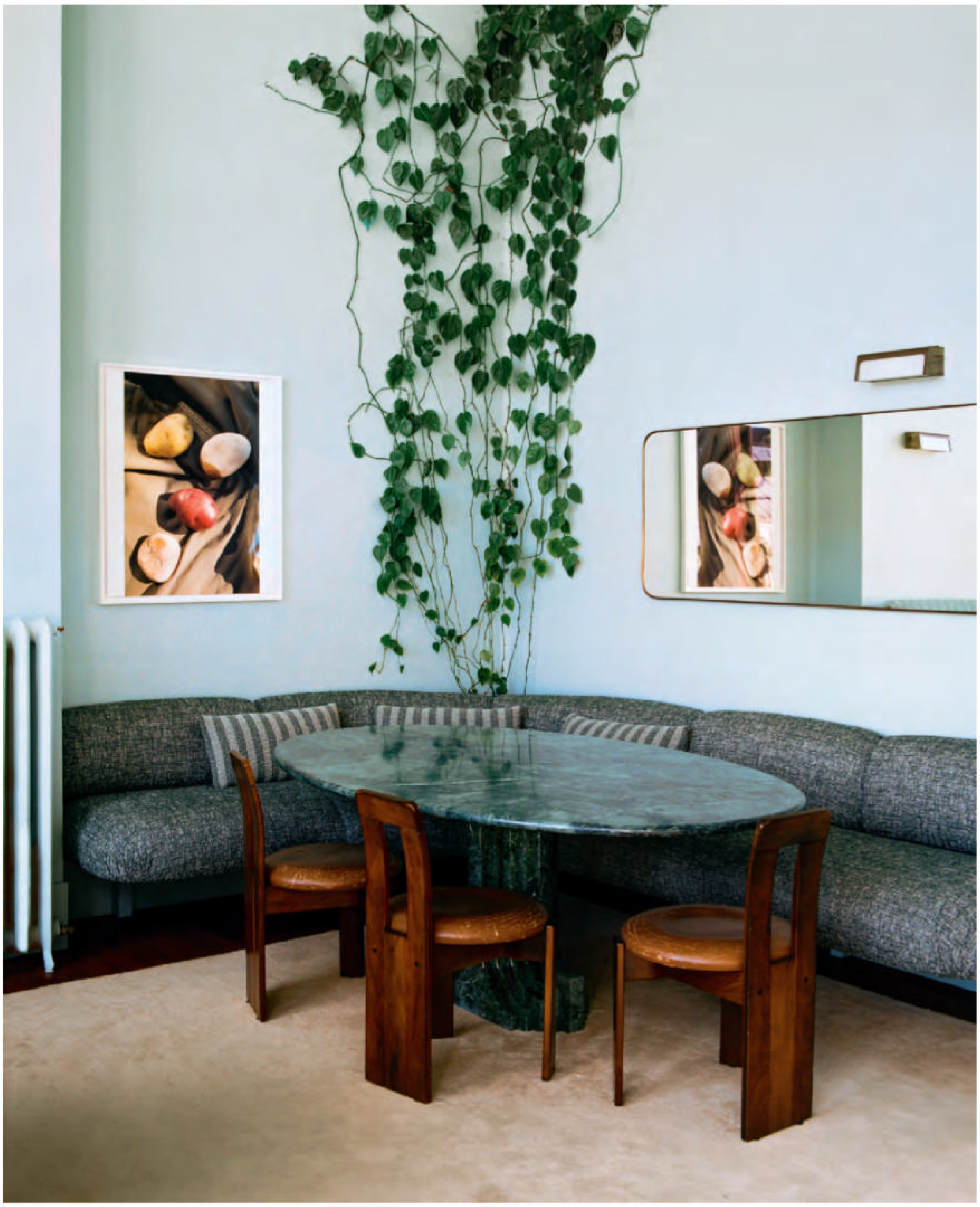
The pear tree was still there, gaunt as a dowager in mink. The gigantic rambler, *Rosa* 'Sir Cedric Morris', was greening up. And, here and there among the long grass, fritillaries. One was blanched green with nut-brown splashes and elegant chestnut striations inside the bell. Another was a mottled maroon, with a striped sulphur-yellow interior. Cedric's ghosts, still steadily self-seeding: a beautiful law unto themselves ❂ *Visit bentonend.co.uk*



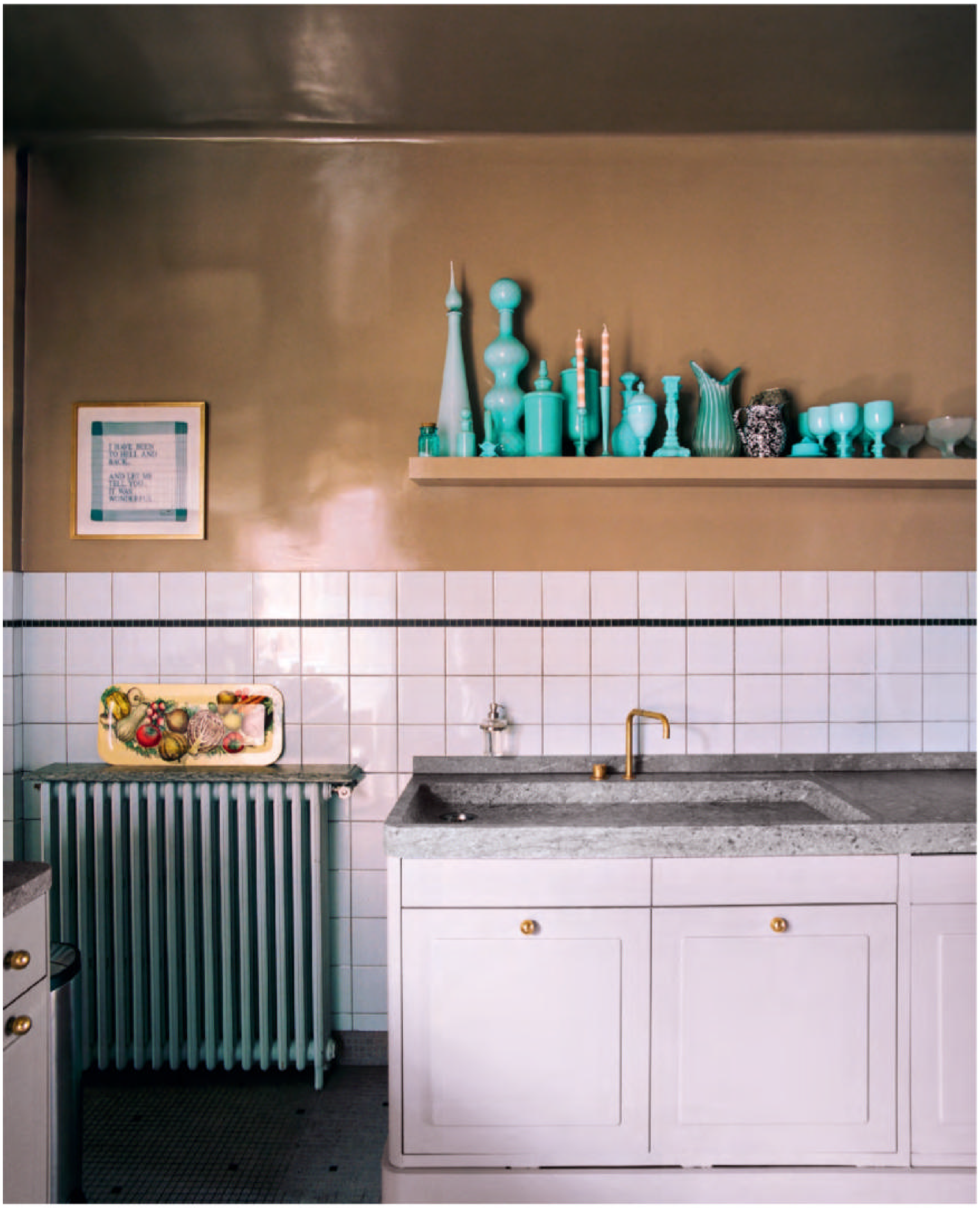
A bed(room) of irises: who needs botanical wallpaper when you can have the heads of real flowers prettying up the plaster? One of the rooms at Benton End, which awaits work prior to opening to visitors by the Garden Museum, gets the Tim Walker touch

HASTA LA VISTA

Fashion executive Felipe Oliveira Baptista, who said goodbye to Kenzo in 2021, has lived in Paris for two decades but misses the continual sunshine that his native Lisbon afforded. So when he and his wife, Séverine, went hunting for a flat in the City of Lights large picture windows and a panorama were top of the agenda. Well, sacré bleu! – or rather, Sacré-Coeur, given the family's view of Montmartre – they nailed it. Text: Ellie Pithers. Photography: Matthieu Salvaing



Previous pages: beyond Mario Bellini's 'Camaleonda' sofa segments is a wrap-around balcony with astonishing views. This page: Sergio Rodriguez chairs surround a marble 'Samo' dining table by Carlo Scarpa. The 2017 Wolfgang Tillmans photograph is among the couple's most cherished pieces. Opposite: Séverine takes her morning coffee in Michel Ducaroy's croissant-shaped 'Marsala' chair. Sittings editor: Gianluca Longo



Opposite: fond of the curved kitchen wall in a previous home, the couple revisited the idea here, so that a leather banquette arcs convivially round an Ettore Sottsass dining table. The chairs are by Joe Colombo and the 'Kalaari' ceiling lamp is by Vico Magistretti for Oluce. This page: Séverine accumulated her collection of vintage blue opaline vessels over years of visits to the End of History, an antique glassware shop in New York

Three floor-to-ceiling *portes-fenêtres* frame Felipe Oliveira Baptista's cavernous living room in the top-floor duplex overlooking Paris's hip Saint-Georges neighbourhood. The effect is dazzling. Combined with the sheer Austrian curtains, a stripy chimney breast, a devil's ivy and a Mario Bellini 'Camaleonda' sofa, the light pouring in lends the *salon* a cinematic quality. It's hard to resist stepping out on to the slim terrace, where one could while away an afternoon people-watching in the square below. But the real spectacle strikes when night falls, and a pink-streaked sky fades to reveal the twinkling lights of Montmartre, with the glowing onions of the Sacré-Coeur basilica almost close enough to touch.

A fashion designer and artist, Oliveira Baptista left his native Lisbon at 18 having taken the city's 3,000 hours of sunshine a year for granted. Once established in Paris, first at Christophe Lemaire, latterly as creative director at Lacoste and Kenzo, he found himself yearning for the rays. So when he finally bought a home in the so-called City of Lights, almost two decades after he first set foot in France, vast windows would inevitably be a priority.

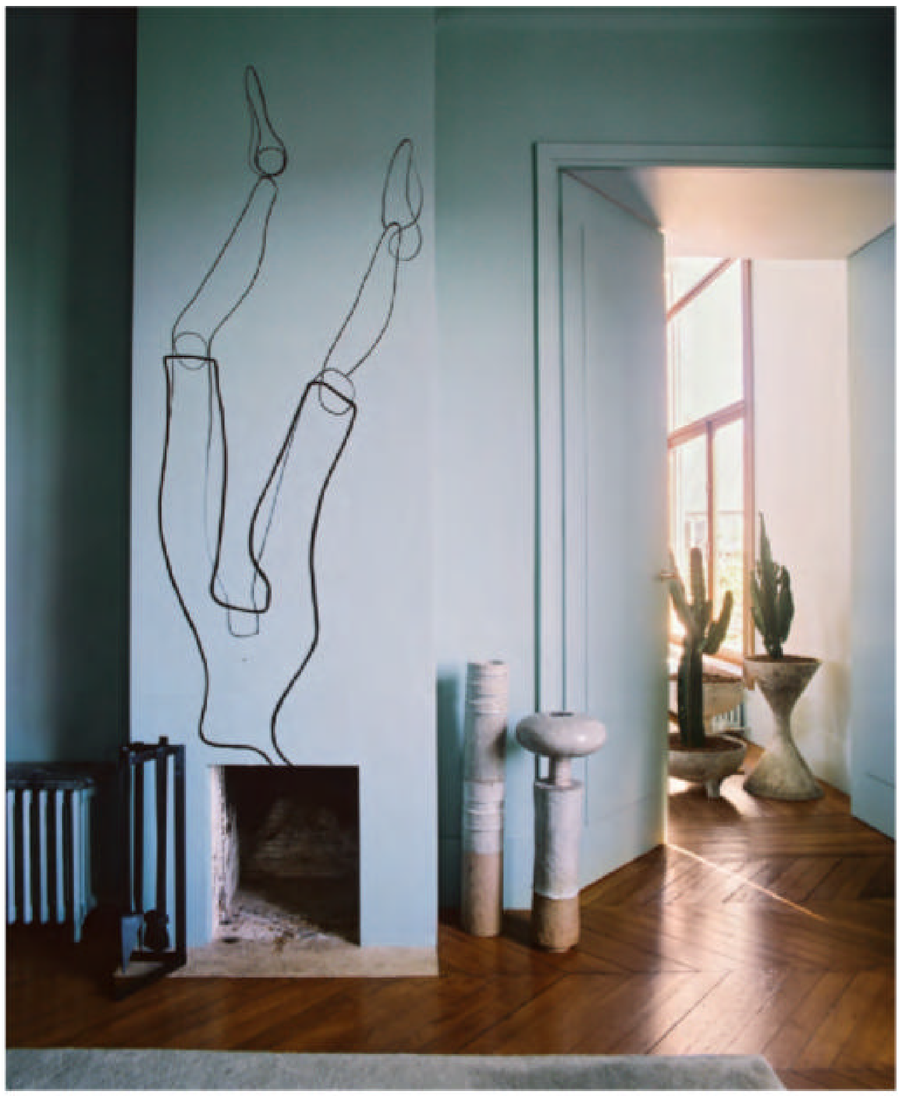
Oliveira Baptista credits his Parisian wife, Séverine, with finding such a gem. Originally, the couple – who are partners in work as well as in life, having founded their own fashion label together in 2003 – wanted a house, rather than an apartment. Both liked to work from home sometimes, and with two teenage boys, they figured they would need the space. But after several disappointing estate-agent appointments, they decided to prioritise a view. When Séverine spotted a listing online with just one photograph, showing the panoramic vista from what is now the family's living-room window, she booked a visit.

They knew instantly the apartment was a goer. 'As soon as the guy from the agency's back was turned, we looked at each other and screamed silently,' recalls Felipe, laughing. 'What's even more cheesy is that 20 years ago we went for dinner at a friend's house just around the corner from here. Afterwards, we walked into the square below, and I pointed up to this apartment and said to Séverine: "Oh, one day I would love to live in a place like that."' As for that longed-for view? 'It's like living with a cinema screen.'

Behind the screen, however, things weren't always so coherent. When the Oliveira Baptistas got the keys in 2016, the space comprised a mishmash of eras: the Gothic fireplaces were overbearing, for example, and the 1920s mirrored hallway was damaged and had various tired Haussmannian features. That said, the curved wall and elegantly turned staircase in the same spot provided early inspiration; the couple decided to open up the layout, removing doors in favour of clear archways and repeating that curved motif throughout. 'But we didn't want too much intervention,' adds Séverine, who masterminded the nine-month renovation. 'We wanted it to feel like it could have been like this from the beginning.'

A serene, almost dreamy atmosphere prevails thanks to the powder-blue hue that graces every room apart from the kitchen (cappuccino brown) and the bathroom (glossy khaki green). It took a couple of tries to hit on this particular shade,

Opposite: the entrance hall includes a George Nelson desk for Herman Miller, various sculptures by the couple's friends Kalou Dubus and Pascal Humbert, and a papier-mâché mirror from the Window, a favourite antique store in LA. This page: possibly by Warren Platner, this unusual wall-mounted 1960s walnut coat cupboard spins to reveal storage



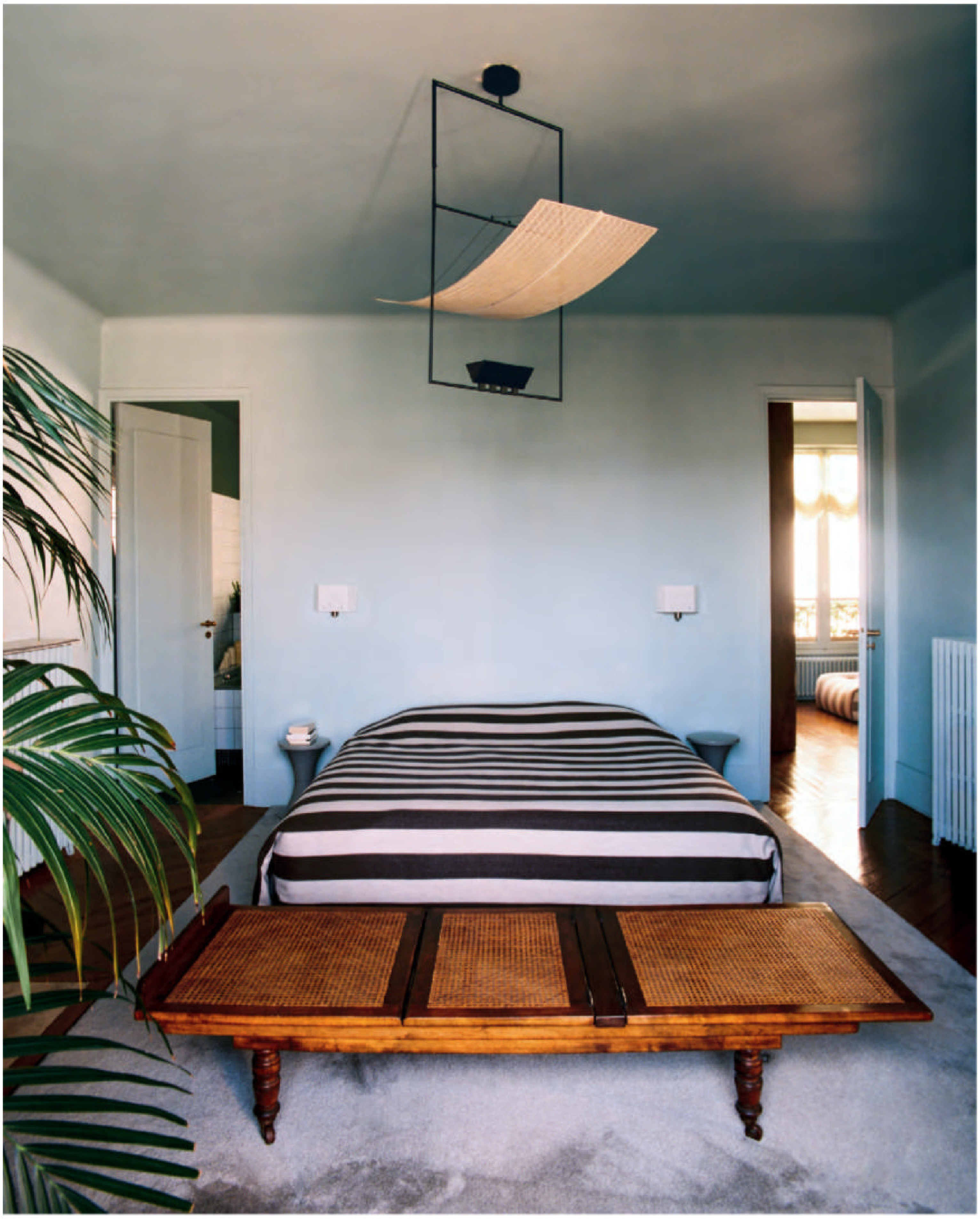
which Séverine describes as 'a calm blue: soothing but uplifting'; after the oak floors were stained a darker, more Brazilian brown, the walls needed to be repainted with something stronger. The family have always had blue homes, so she never doubted her choice. More perplexing was the fireplace, whose chimney was remodelled to recall the curved one at Villa Cavrois, Robert Mallet-Stevens's Modernist mansion in northern France. 'It's been [painted] blue, it's been dark, it's been faux-wood,' says Séverine, smiling. 'Now, it's stripes, and I'm super-happy. It took me a while to convince Felipe, but I love it.'

A creative to-and-fro has informed the flat, much as it has guided the couple's professional partnership. 'In fashion, he is the leader, and then we ping-pong,' she says, affectionately. 'With the house, it's the other way round. But the dialogue is the same. We love to exchange, and to end up somewhere we wouldn't land if we were separate.' Their individual touches create a textured harmony. Felipe's paintings and photographs enliven many of the rooms; having left Kenzo in the summer of 2021, the designer has spent the past 18 months drawing and painting, culminating in an exhibition, which included lithographs and engravings, in Paris in May 2022. His loose, languid figures decorate chimney breasts and cupboard doors. Meanwhile, Séverine's facility for unearthing 1970s and 1980s treasures online can be seen in the Mario Botta ceiling lamps, Ettore Sottsass tables and Sergio Rodrigues dining chairs. Her attention to detail is similarly exacting: Michel Ducaroy's 'Togo' sofas were re-covered in a Raf Simons for Kvadrat fabric; she chose in person the avocado bathroom suite from a reclamation yard in Britain; the cappuccino-gloss kitchen was lined in basic blue Portuguese tiles, 'the cheapest you can buy', to offset the collection of blue opaline glassware she assembled over many years of visits to the End of History, the celebrated New York antique shop.

The couple isn't precious about the apartment – so much so that they let their eldest son throw his 18th-birthday party here on his last day of high school. 'We went to stay in a hotel next door,' recalls Felipe. 'We were a bit scared, because there were 60 teenagers! At 1am we came to look at it from outside, and you could hear them screaming, see all the silhouettes dancing.' ('But he did clean it up,' adds Séverine.) They enjoy decorating the house for Christmas and hosting dinners and parties, too, for a creative Parisian set that includes the fashion designer Pascal Humbert and the ceramicist Kalou Dubus. Felipe does the cooking. 'Being Portuguese, I do a good *bacalhau*,' he says.

For now, the parties are on pause, as the family navigates a move back to Lisbon. They plan to have a base in both cities, with Felipe focused on consulting work alongside his art practice, and Séverine exploring a nascent career in interior design. They are renovating an early 20th-century house with a garden; Séverine has already begun winning bids for vintage pieces on online auctions. 'I think it's nice when a house is a map of your life – things that we have lived, collected,' says Felipe. Sunshine aside, they'll have a hard time replicating their Paris view. Séverine nods: 'It's always a beautiful surprise' ⊛

This page: Felipe's languid illustration lends a touch of whimsy to the TV room's chimney breast, while German 1970s ceramic totems purchased in Lisbon echo the upright forms of Willy Guhl's planters beyond the doorway. Opposite: a 1980s 'Inverted Triangle' ceiling light, by Mario Botta for Artemide, points down to Michel Ducaroy's 'Togo' sofa set



This page: in the main bedroom, another Botta ceiling light for Artemide – 'Zafiro' – sets sail above a striped bedspread that Séverine had made in Paris. Opposite: in the couple's en suite, the avocado bathroom suite was snapped up at a reclamation yard in Britain. Bought at the Paul Bert flea market, two chairs are arranged like a conversation seat

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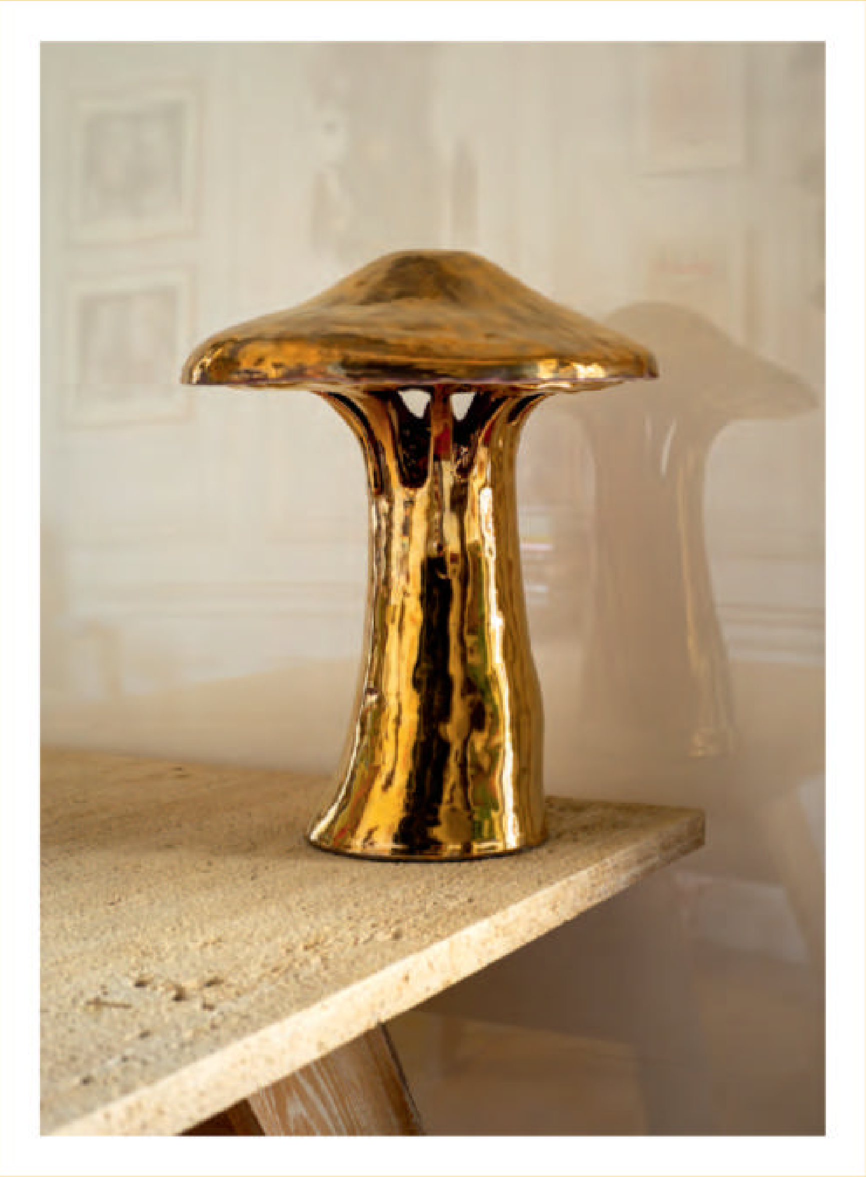
AFTERWORD



Glazed in 22ct gold, Atelier MVM's 'Shroom Lamp' sits proudly in the home of creative director Matthias Vriens. See page 108. Photograph: Dusan Vuksanovic

THE INTERIORS
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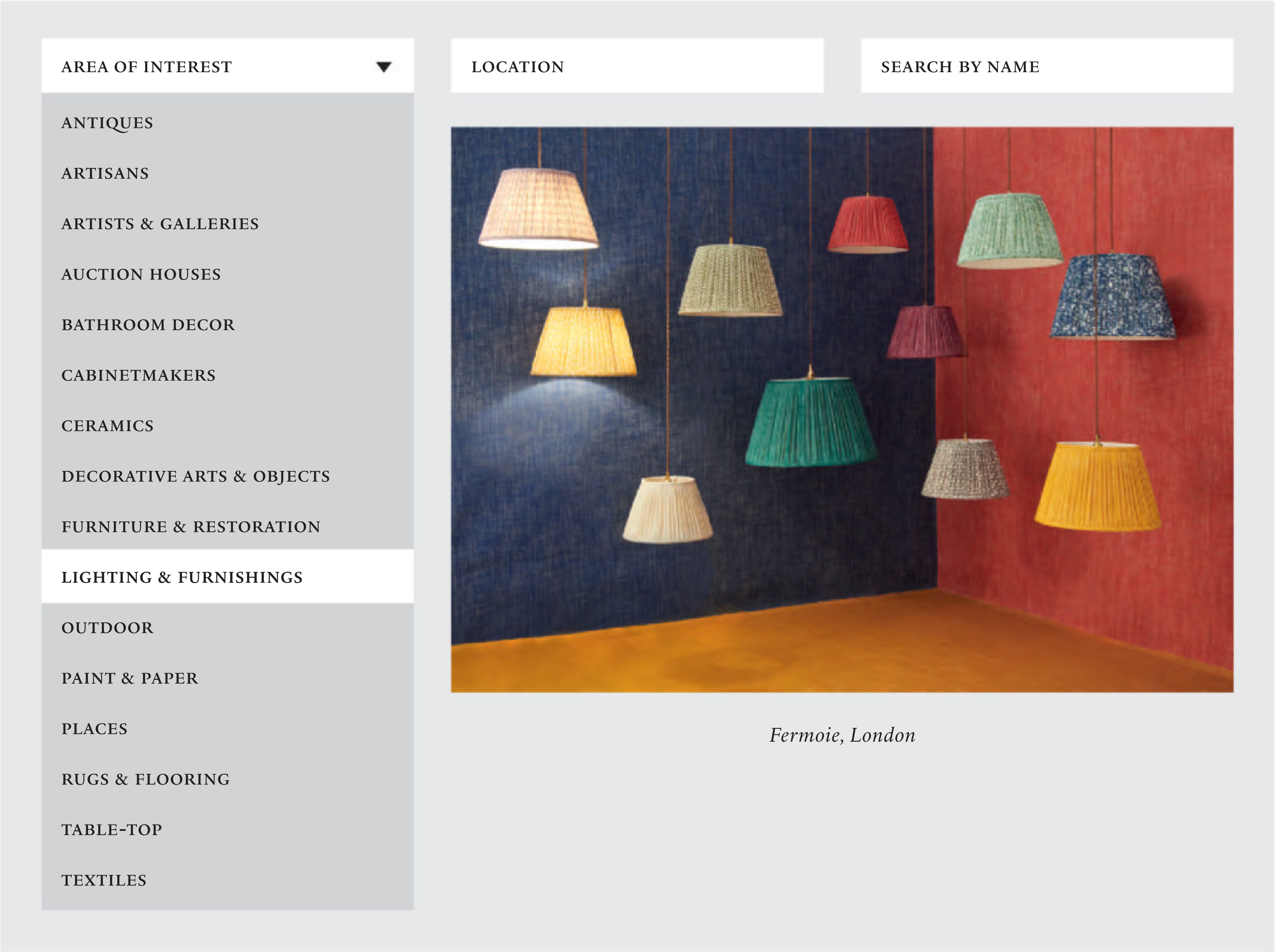
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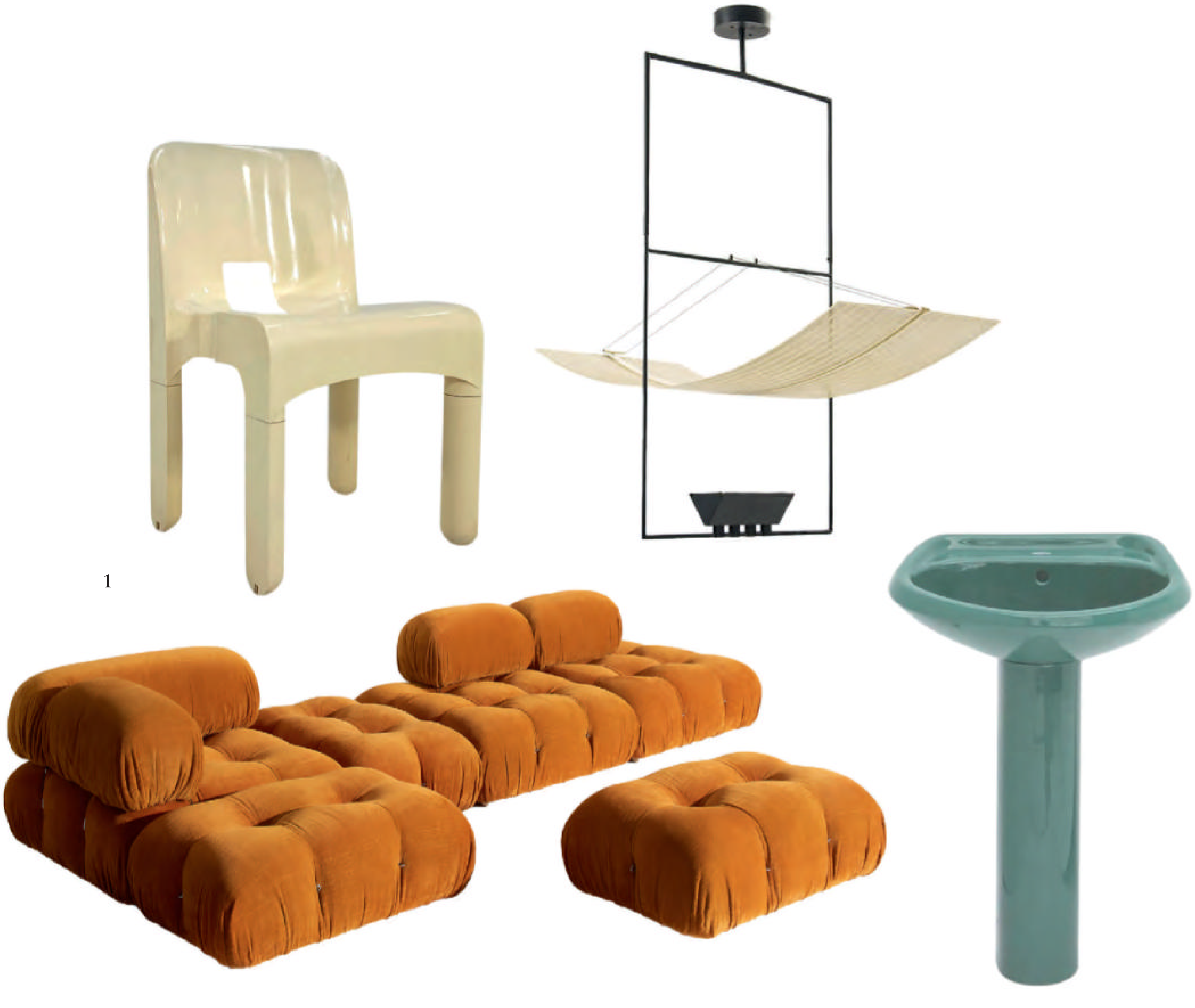
Inspiration

Some of the design effects in this issue, recreated by Gareth Wyn Davies and Ariadne Fletcher



1 A case for Colombo: that'll be Joe Colombo, who designed the polypropylene stacking chairs spotted in the kitchen of Felipe and Séverine Oliveira Baptista's Paris duplex (page 144). But then the design sleuths among you probably knew that already. You may also be aware that the 'Sedia Universale' – the name of that model for Kartell – is no longer produced. Fret not. We've done some detective work and can report that Pamono is a good source of coveted originals – the one here is in a shade of cream strangely evocative of evaporated milk and is part of a suite of four (£1,424). Visit pamono.co.uk. Kenzo's former creative director flies the kite for sundry other classics by the *grands fromages* of 20th-century design, including that delicately sculptural 'Zafiro' light fitting by Mario Botta in the bedroom (page 150). It is available from Side Gallery in Barcelona for £3,300 approx. Visit side-gallery.com. Here for the lolls: you really do need a low-slung sofa just like Felipe and Séverine's to fully appreciate a skyscape as cinematic as the one seen from their salon (page 140). Indeed, what better than a 'Camaleonda' by Mario Bellini from B&B Italia (from £3,467 for a module with a high back-rest)? Theirs is upholstered in a sumptuous chocolate-brown velvet redolent of the *années soixante-dix*, as with much else in their ninth-arrondissement pad; this one is in an equally echt orange. Visit bebitalia.com. Apropos of the 1970s, three words you never thought you'd read in these pages: avocado, bathroom, suite. If you think the one in Paris is the peak of retro chic (page 151), you'd best repair to Broken Bog, whose vintage stock in period colours is well worth a – ahem – plug (shown: wild sage pedestal and sink; £319). Visit shop.brokenbog.com.

COLOMBO CHAIR IMAGE: COURTESY PAMONO AND LOOLOO MODERN SRL

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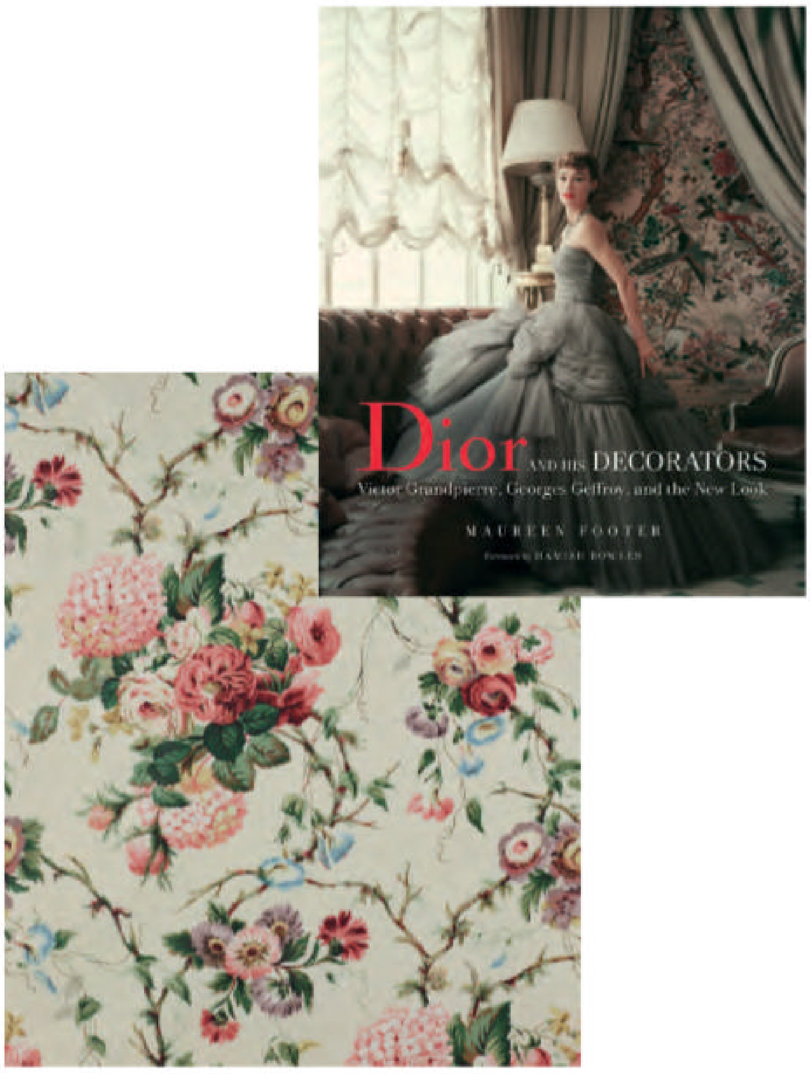
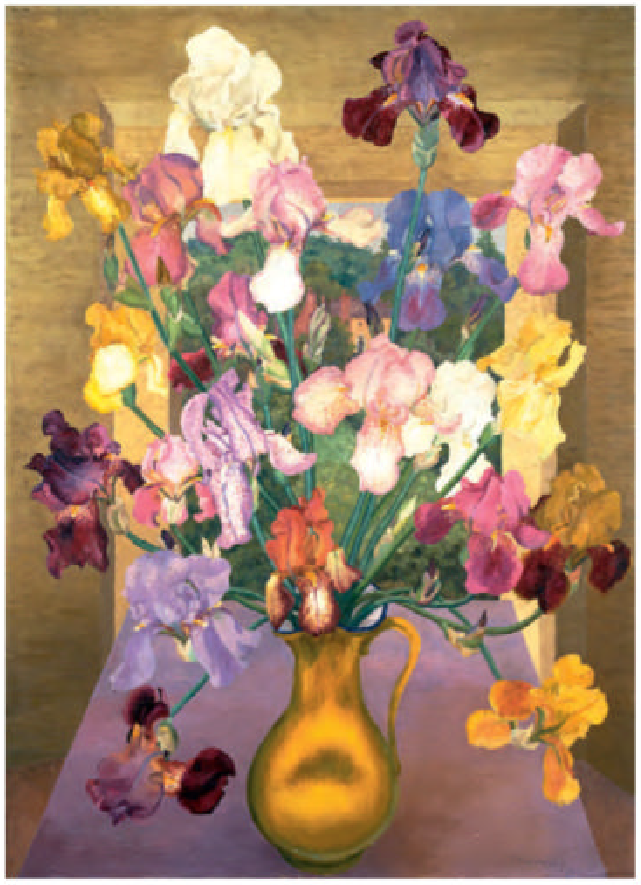
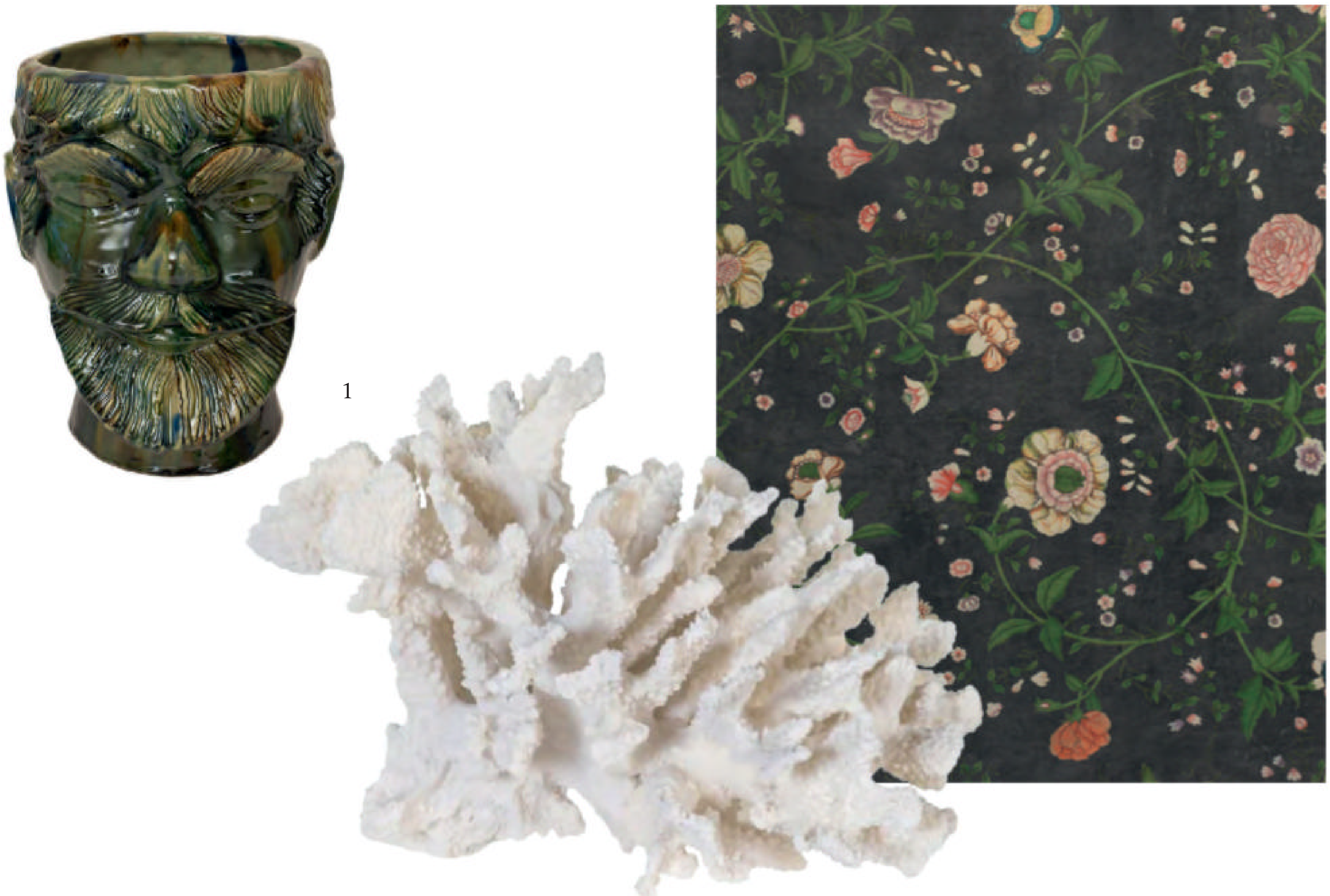

Dior AND HIS DECORATORS
Victor Grandpierre, Georges Geffroy, and the New Look
MAUREEN FOOTER
Foreword by HAMISH BOWLES

LA COLLE NOIRE
CHRISTIAN DIOR
PARIS



2 Ablute fabulously: Christian Dior was a sucker for swan taps and a sarcophagus bath. They could be found, tucked behind portière curtains (another of his penchants), in his town house in Passy; and they crop up at La Colle Noire (page 97). So he'd no doubt have zero qualms about splashing £18,000 on a 'Roman' San Marino marble tub from Lapicida. Visit lapicida.com. Nor £17,881 on PE Guerin's 'No. 11201' nickel-and-gold basin set. Visit peguerin.com. There's arguably no greater authority on the *goût* Dior than Maureen Footer, whose lavish tome, *Dior and His Decorators* (Vendome, £50), charts its evolution and carries a foreword by our very own editor. If walls could talk, those in the summer salon would surely have much to say about the illustrious visitors back in the 1950s. As it is, they serve to remind us that the couturier was, among other things, an unabashed Anglophile. We refer you to the Colefax & Fowler design – 'Amberley' – covering the curtains, chairs and guéridon, as well as said walls (page 92). Not so much the New Look as a #fulllook, to borrow an Instagram hashtag. Shown: fabric, £102 per m. Visit colefax.com. Finally, you've seen the estate, now buy the scent: no prizes for guessing what inspired 'La Colle Noire', a hymn to that very place and its May roses (£115 for 40ml). Visit dior.com.

3 Rhizomes to be cheerful: after reading Olivia Laing's glorious evocation of the iris beds (and louche goings-on) at Sir Cedric Morris's Suffolk house (page 130), you'll be longing for some of his cultivars, real or illustrated. May we suggest 'Benton Menace', named after his moggy, from Beth Chatto (£9.50 for a one-litre pot; visit bethchatto.co.uk), and 'Iris Seedlings', a print of the 1943 work by the artist, from Tate (from £25; visit tate.org.uk)?



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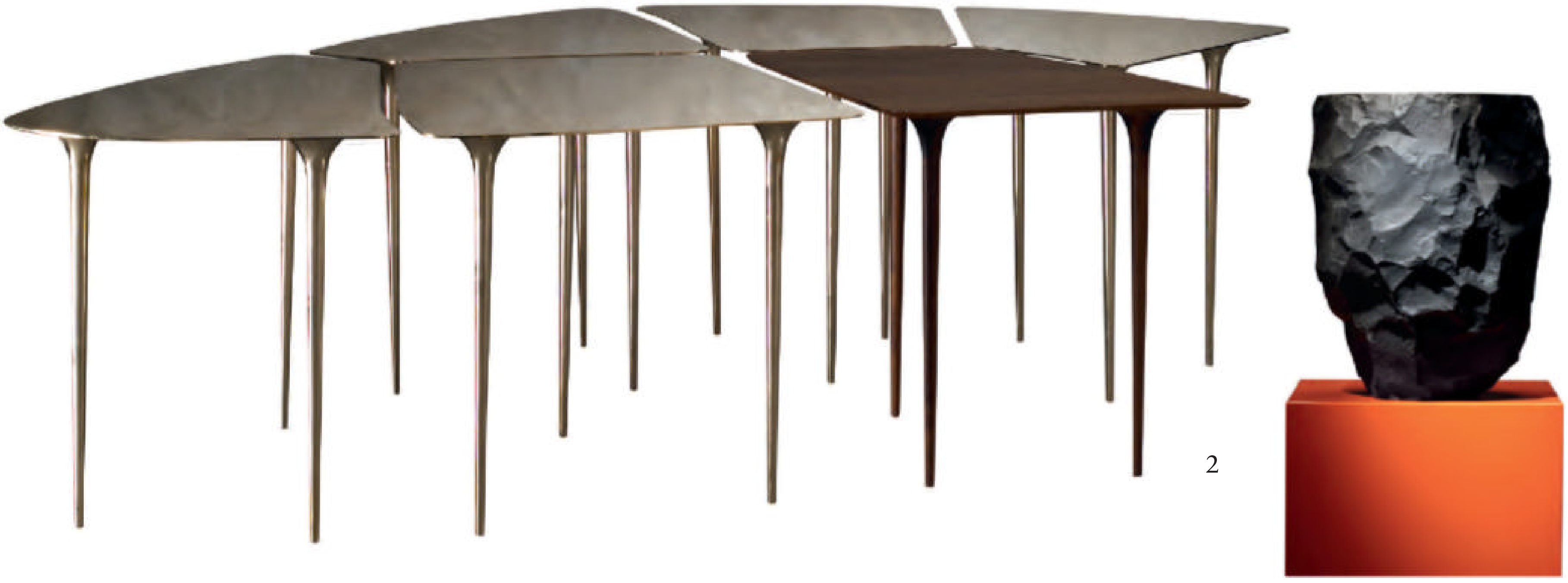

2

1 What's inside Matthias Vriens's head? Quite a lot, judging by the photographer and designer's restless creative output in the three decades since *WoI* first wrote about him. As for this particular one – a 'Sicilian' head vase from his fresh-out-of-the-kiln new collection – you decide, really: a book of matches, car keys, orphaned elastic bands, a spent bus ticket… Obviously flowers would look better, as per the visage-y vases dotted here and there around his Los Angeles home (page 108). Based on an 18th-century copy, this is 28cm high and costs $4,500. Contact info@ateliermvm.com. For the full shipwrecked effect similar to the tableau in Vriens's hall (page 114) team with a piece of faux coral (£69.99) from Berrys & Grey. Visit berrysandgrey.co.uk. When Vriens bought the house, the slightly risqué murals that actor-turned-decorator William Haines had commissioned for its stairwell had long since disappeared, sad to say. But the wallpaper now hanging there (page 113) is a worthy substitute, though not in the least saucy. We dare say John Derian devotees out there will be able to name that design in one: 'Le Paravent Chinois Iris' for Braquenié (£189 per m). Visit pierrefrey.com.
2 'The classic chalet is quite boring, and we wanted a bit of Brutalism.' So say the owners of the incredible mountain home in St Moritz. And Brutalism's what they got, albeit of the most refined variety, from the black larch cladding to the Locatelli Partners tables (page 120). This – the modular 'West Lake' – is from the self-same studio and costs £57,500 approx. Visit locatellipartners.com. Just top with a rugged vessel such as Max Lamb's 'Crockery Big Vase 1' for 1882 (£2,890), which is similar to one of the many in their salon (page 123). Visit 1882ltd.com ⊛

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1. ARTEMIS DESIGN CO.'s signature Loafers have gained a cult following, and for good reason: the classic and comfortable everyday style, is made extra special by the vintage kilim and oriental carpet textiles that they use. Their creations are everyday heirlooms, designed to be worn daily and loved for a long time. Visit www.artemisdesignco.com and follow @artemisdesignco on Instagram.

1

2. PARS RUG GALLERY has extensive curated collections of antique Oriental and European rugs, kilims, carpets and tapestries. They provide home approvals all over the UK. Their UK-based workshop also provides comprehensive cleaning and restoration services. Visit at parsruggallery.co.uk email at pars@parsruggallery.co.uk or call 01794 524040.

2

3. Inspired by an array of different eras and references, from the Renaissance, Victoriana, and the intricate stories of Greek mythology, and indulging in compositions and the narratives of the human form, **ARTEMISIA'S TALES** aims to blend the opulent with the whimsical, infusing a new visual history into the contemporary home. Visit www.artemisiastales.com and follow @artemisias_tales on Instagram.

3

4. SILK ROAD RUGS are home to a vast collection of authentically handcrafted carpets, rugs, kilims, furniture and furnishings from the Middle and Far East, where these crafts have sustained their peoples for centuries. To explore the whole collection and get more information about cleaning and repairs, visit www.silkroad-rugs.co.uk or contact them on 01275 319950 and email info@silkroad-rugs.co.uk for orders.

4

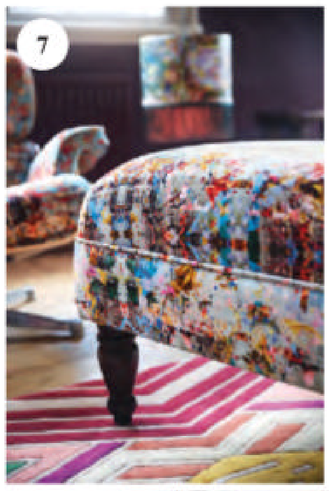
5. ASNEW UPHOLSTERY and Design are Oxfordshire's leading re-upholstery experts. Specialising in custom-made new upholstered furniture, curtains, blinds, and soft furnishings. Each piece is handmade to order by a highly skilled team of craftsmen and women using the highest quality materials. To find out more, visit their Oxfordshire showroom, the website www.asnew-upholstery.co.uk email info@asnew-upholstery.co.uk or call 01235 522770.

5

6. Interiors that tell a story – **SAMARKAND DESIGN**'s lighting and decorative accessories are sourced from artisans along the Silk Road. Celebrating colour, traditional skills and unique design. Take a look at their website, samarkanddesign.com or follow @samarkanddesign on Instagram.

6

7. BLACKPOP are renowned for their exquisite colour palettes and unique statement wallpapers, wall murals and patterned fabrics, that include cotton and sustainable velvets, cotton voiles and printed light weaves. Their visionary bespoke design service includes a luxury in-house upholstery and drapery team. Visit www.blackpop.co.uk or follow @blackpopuk on Instagram.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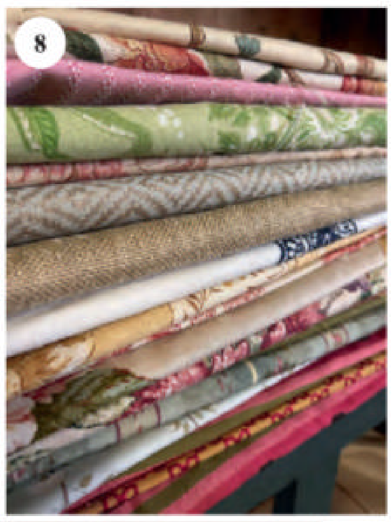
8. THE LOFT AT MORE HALL, making every fabric count. Are you sitting on any unwanted, preloved fabrics, maybe in an old cupboard or your attic? No matter how long you have had your old fabrics – they still want them! Old fabric reinvented. Visit www.more-hall.com or call 07968 057873 to find out more.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9. TESSELLATE TEXTILES, based in Southwestern Ontario, designs and produces handmade quilts and textile art. The colourful quilts are influenced by the founder's Egyptian Canadian heritage, with her Middle Eastern background and traditional Western patchwork inspiring each collection. Discover more at www.tessellatetextiles.ca and follow @tessellate_textiles on Instagram. Photo credit to Kasia Dunn Photography.

9

10. KATE FORMAN specialises in linens, cottons and wallpapers, all printed in England. Accessories such as trimmings, lamp shades, box files and cushions are also available in any of the designs. Mixing classic florals with bohemian chic, her collections have the versatile and eclectic informality that her style is so renowned for. Visit www.kateforman.co.uk for plenty of inspiration, email info@kateforman.co.uk or call 01962 732244 to find out more.

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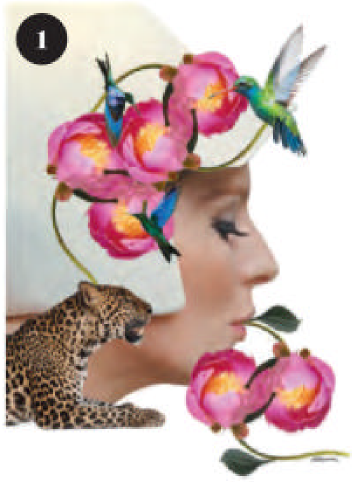
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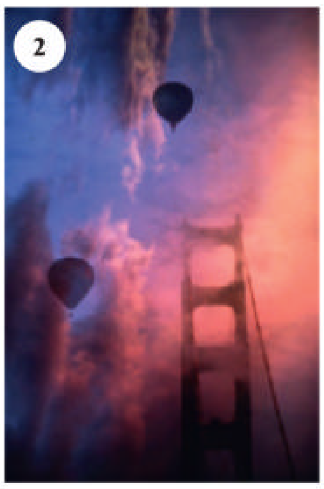
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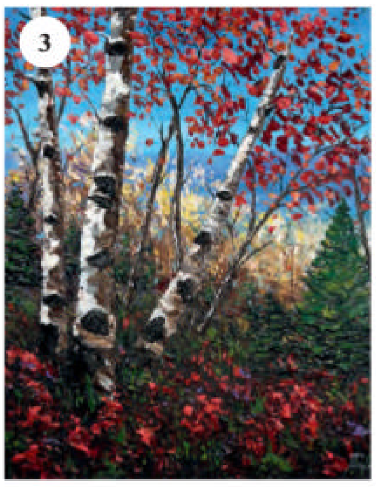
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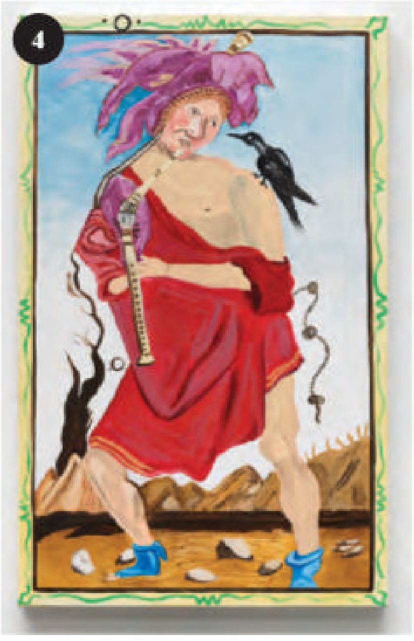
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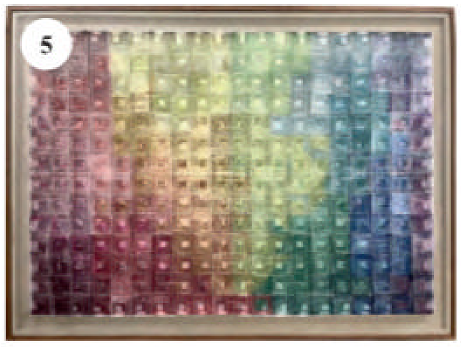
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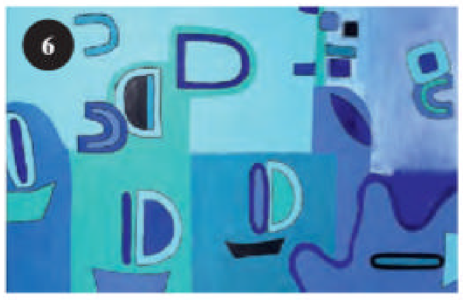
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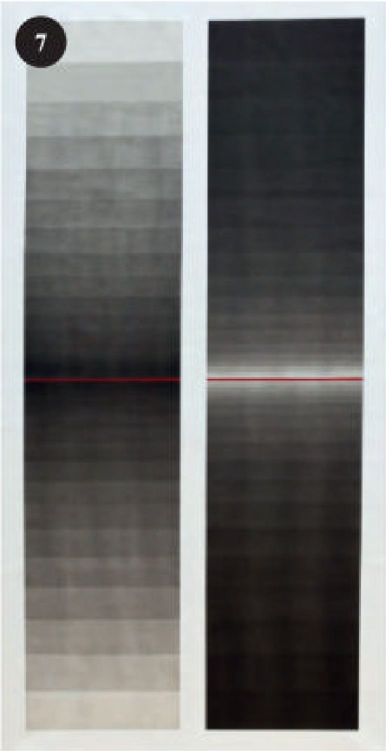
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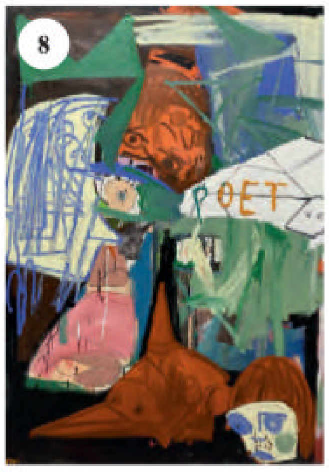
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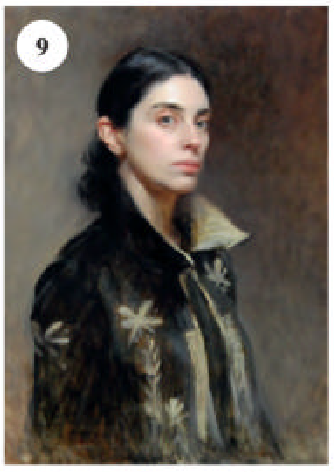
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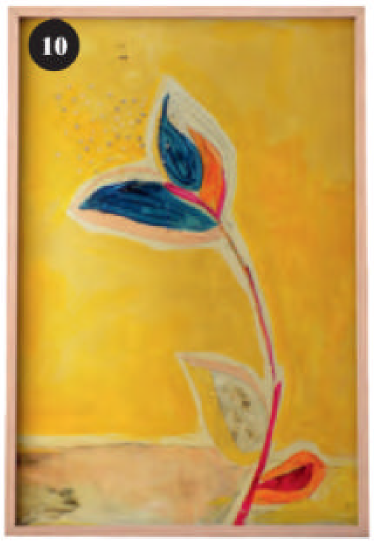
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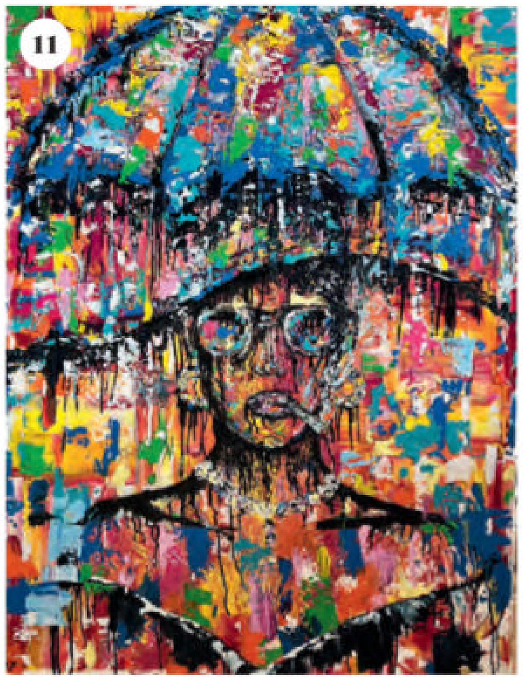
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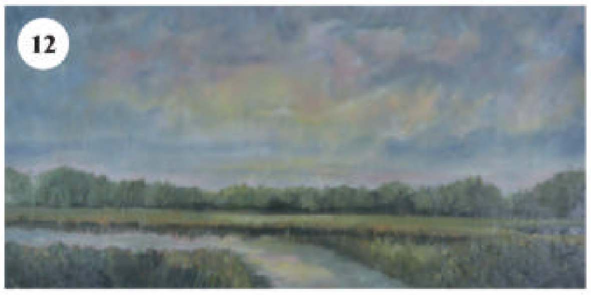
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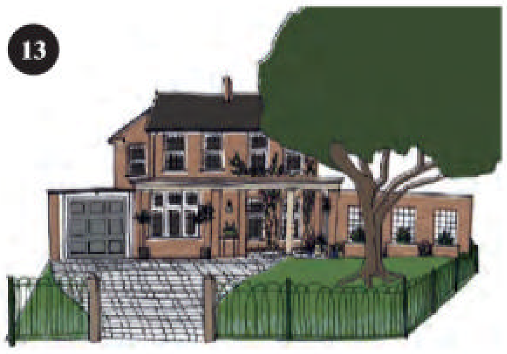
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1. CATARINA DIAZ is a London-based artist whose minimalist analogue collages celebrate life. Her works juxtapose surrealism and figurative interpretations of the feminine, challenging the viewer to find the deeper meaning and core beauty, with all its duality and transcendent existence. Find out more at catarinadiaz.com or follow @catarina_diaz_ on Instagram.

2. KAREN SCALLY is a San Francisco based fine art photographer who seeks to create images with strong, ethereal qualities. Karen's photographs have been published in the National Geographic and Travel and Leisure. Her exhibits include galleries in New York, Denver, Carmel, Philadelphia and Napa Valley. Visit www.karenscally.com or email karenjscally@gmail.com

3. GAYLE FAULKNER paints textural acrylics, she uses a palette knife to create a variety of textures and colour combinations. She is inspired by the freedom of the loud music she plays when creating, and her joy comes across to the viewer. All are invited to enter the painting, smell the flowers, listen to the rustle of the leaves, lean against a tree and just breathe. Visit gaylefaulknerfineart.com search @gaylefaulknerartist on Facebook and follow @faulkner.gayle on Instagram.

4. Los Angeles based contemporary artist, **SUSAN LIZOTTE**, has exhibited her works both in the US and internationally. Her paintings flow and unfold themselves. Explore her varied collections online at www.susanlizotte.com and follow @susanlizotte on Instagram.

5. BELLA EASTON is a London based painter and printmaker. A graduate of The Royal Academy Schools, UK, she has exhibited extensively internationally. Having received many awards, her artwork is in public and private collections, and has become recognised for its unusual immersive grid construction that examines extracts of architectural spaces through atmospherically lit compositions and technical innovation. Pictured is 'Bound', 280 lithography printed panels of silk over 4760 hand dyed and stitched pieces of silk (unique work) 222cm x 157cm. For further information, visit www.bellaeaston.com or follow @bellaeastonart on Instagram. Contact info@beaston.co.uk

6. Swiss artist **CLAUDIA MINI** is an intuitive abstract painter who favours patterns, lines and shapes. A gifted colourist, her monotypes and acrylic paintings look like street graffiti or allude to topographies of imaginary places. Biomorphic shapes, cellular structures and plant life also appear in her work, always transformed in the prism of abstraction. Visit www.claudiamini.com or email info@claudiamini.ch

7. CATIA GOFFINET is a Brazilian artist who develops geometric art, totally abstract and linked to science and themes such as the universe. Paint is layered to create the idea of movement and depth and draw in the eye. Follow @goffinetart on Instagram or email goffinetcatia@gmail.com Pictured is 'Two Sides 9', acrylic on canvas, 77cm x 150cm.

8. In this piece titled 'The Poet' Canadian artist **TYLER TOEWS** (@tylertoews) combines abstract expressionist and gestural painting styles. His paintings speak their own unique language and form dynamic compositions of bold colours, geometric shapes, portraits, and loose hints of representation. For more information about Tyler and his work, contact Allison Thompson of AT Art and Interiors at www.allisonthompsonstudio.com and follow @atartinteriors on Instagram.

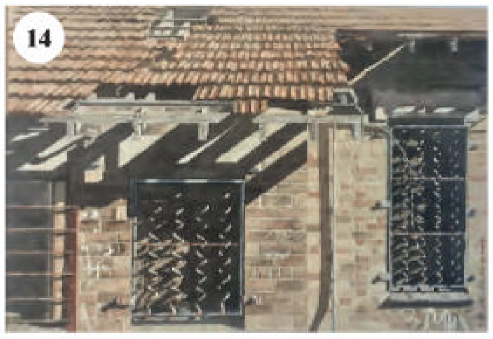
9. PHOEBE STEWART CARTER is a classically trained oil painter who takes her inspiration from the natural world. Her work includes portraits, landscapes, still life and figurative paintings and drawings. Although the subject matter differs, all work is executed exclusively from life; Phoebe believes this is crucial for capturing realism in any medium. Discover more at www.phoebestewartcarter.com and follow @phoebestewartcarter on Instagram.

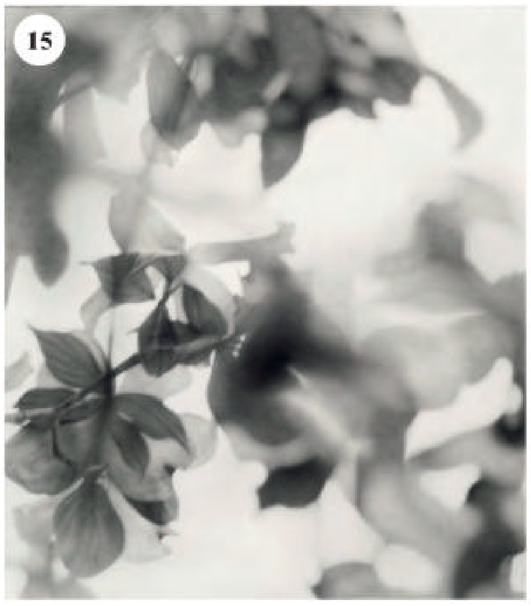
10. Using abstract and mixed media techniques, **GRACEIN**'s work is inspired by her personal experiences and the people who have left a strong impression on her life. She has been featured in solo and group exhibitions, including Rail Station Gallery in Plano, Texas; the Las Laguna Gallery in Laguna Beach, California; and The Other Art Fair, sponsored by Saatchi Art. In addition, her work is in numerous private collections throughout the United States. Visit graceinmcginnis.com email hello@graceinco.com and follow @graceinco on Instagram.

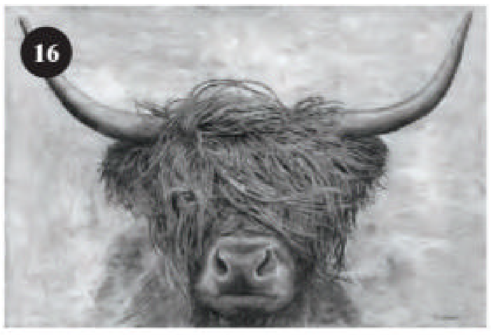
11. Bring vibrant colours to your home or business with unique paintings by **CAMILLA KOCZI**. The Austrian artist has exhibited her work internationally and specialises in custom artworks. Browse www.camillakoczi.com and follow @ckoczi on Instagram.

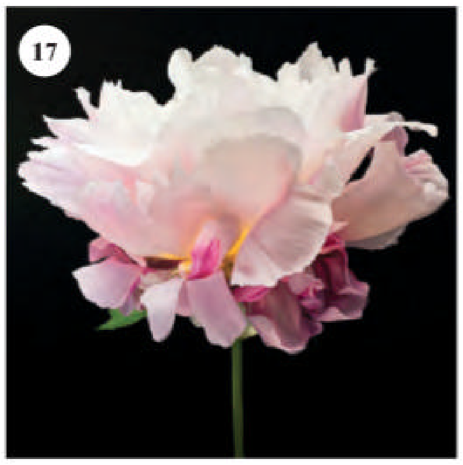
12. MEGAN SPILLARS is an American artist and oil painter based in Raleigh, North Carolina. Her impressionist style features calming landscapes as well as bold florals and figurative work. She draws inspiration from nature and through observations of the simple yet beautiful moments in life. Her work can be found at meganspillars.com and follow @meganspillarsart on Instagram.

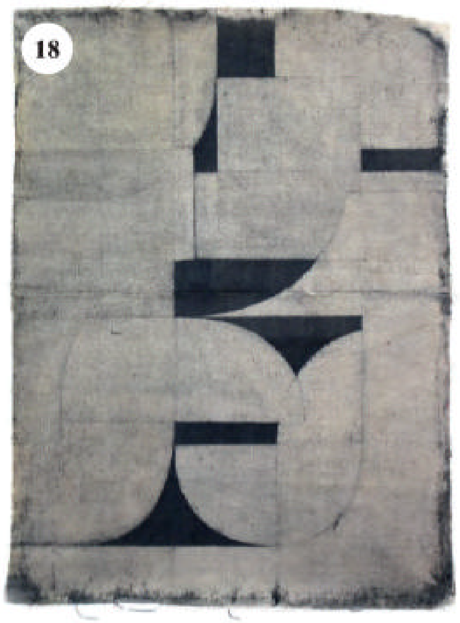
13. ELLIE SMITH is a London-based illustrator. Her charming, hand-drawn homes and wedding venues capture character and detail beautifully, with optional digital colour. Ideal as new home and wedding gifts, these can be commissioned via elliedraws@gmail.com or view her other work @elliedraws on Instagram and at www.elliesmithillustration.square.site

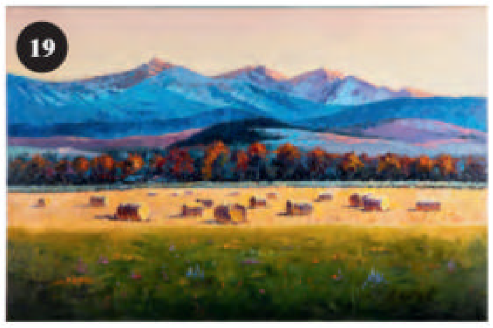


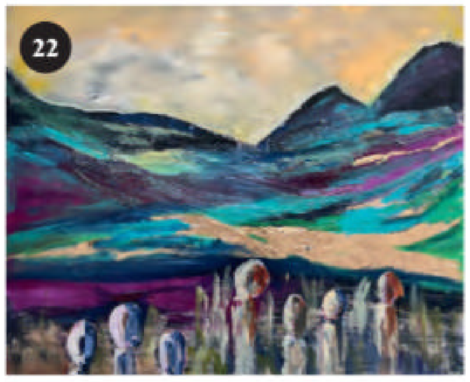


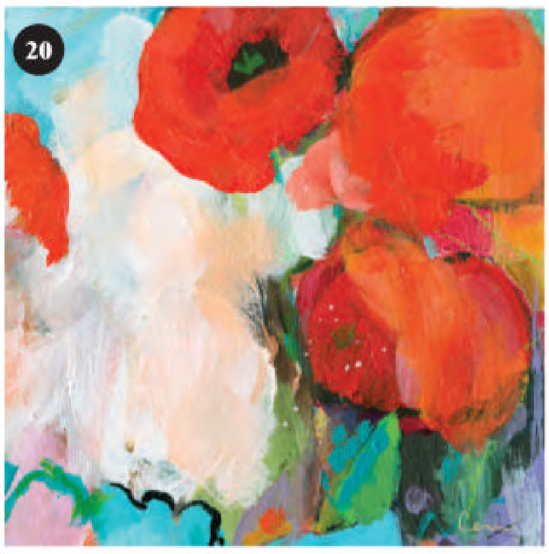


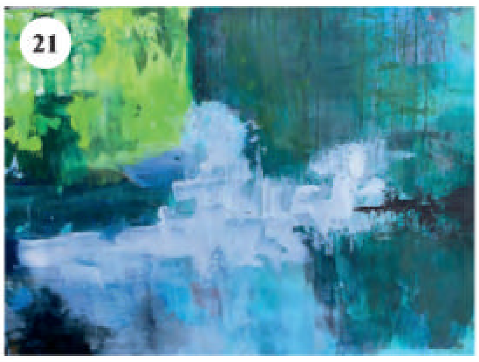


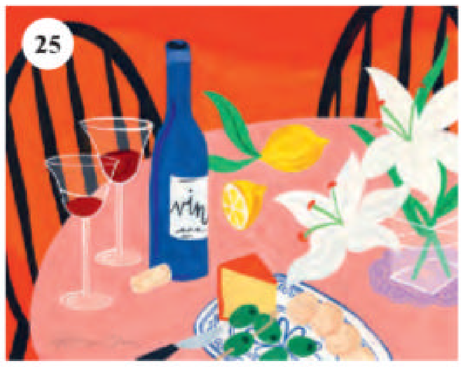


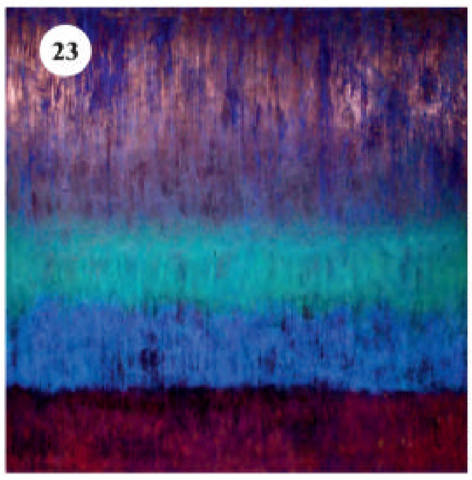












14. RICK BARDSLEY-SMITHis an Australian watercolourist. With training in town planning and architecture he has an interest in buildings, facades and places. He also enjoys our natural environment. He is a member of the Australian Watercolour Institute (AWI) and has exhibited in Taiwan and Italy. Visit www.rbswatercolour.com to find out more.

15. GRACE DINES is an American artist based in France. Her work investigates visual perception using powder pigments and brushes. She explores botanicals through photography, to abstract and create a new sense of her subject, intimately translating the imagery to paper with loose pigment, creating a tactile awareness. Her work embraces obscurity and what new visual exploration can come from it. Visit www.gracedines.com and follow @gracedines.art on Instagram.
Email studio@gracedines.com

16. MARIE-ELAINE CUSSON's artwork reflects her love of animals and nature. Pictured is one of her popular, magnificent Highland bulls. Focusing on the subtle emotion the eye can transcend, her work brings the collector into a world of touching and warm sentiment. A Montreal born artist, her art has been featured on Canadian Post Corporation stamps – Hydrangea 2016 and Crabapple Blossom 2021, her designs were selected by the Royal Canadian Mint (4 coin fractional set " A Royal Wedding" 2017, "Holiday Splendour" 2018, "Holiday Wreath" 2019), and many of her original artworks are in private collections around the world. Get in touch by visiting marieelainecusson.com or the online galleries Singulart.com or Saatchiart.com

17. TRISH MITCHELL is a Cape Town–based fine artist, who has found her artistic home in capturing the numinous quality portrayed in the light, form and sublime delicacy of flowers. A lover of beauty, Trish believes that great art expresses itself with poetry and grace through the mastery of all aspects of technique, and it is her great joy to dedicate her life to this pursuit.
Visit www.trishmitchellfineartist.com follow @trishmitchellfineartist on Instagram or email trish@trishmitchellfineartist.com to find out more.

18. AMÉLIE CRÉPY is a London based textile designer and emerging artist. Her collection of contemporary artwork focuses on hand-made, natural inks and pigments, which are applied to either paper or linen as a wash and then strategically removed to reveal the painting. Bespoke commissions available. To see more of Amélie's work, visit www.ameliecrepy.com or call 07854 641275 for private viewings at her London based studio. Follow @ameliecrepy on Instagram.

19. Born in a Latvian town outside a metropolis **DIANA PIGNI** has always been fascinated by landscapes. Inspired by her travels, she depicts what she observes around the globe with cityscapes and landscapes being her favourite muse. Visit dianapigniart.com and follow @dianapigniart on Instagram.

20. CONNIE COLLUM works primarily in watercolour and mixed media. The foundation of Connie's work is a love of colour and nature, both of which come to life in her vibrant and joyful works. Award-winning and with an international following, her abstract expressionist work is commanding the attention of many. Discover more at www.conniecollumart.com and follow @conniecollumart on Instagram.

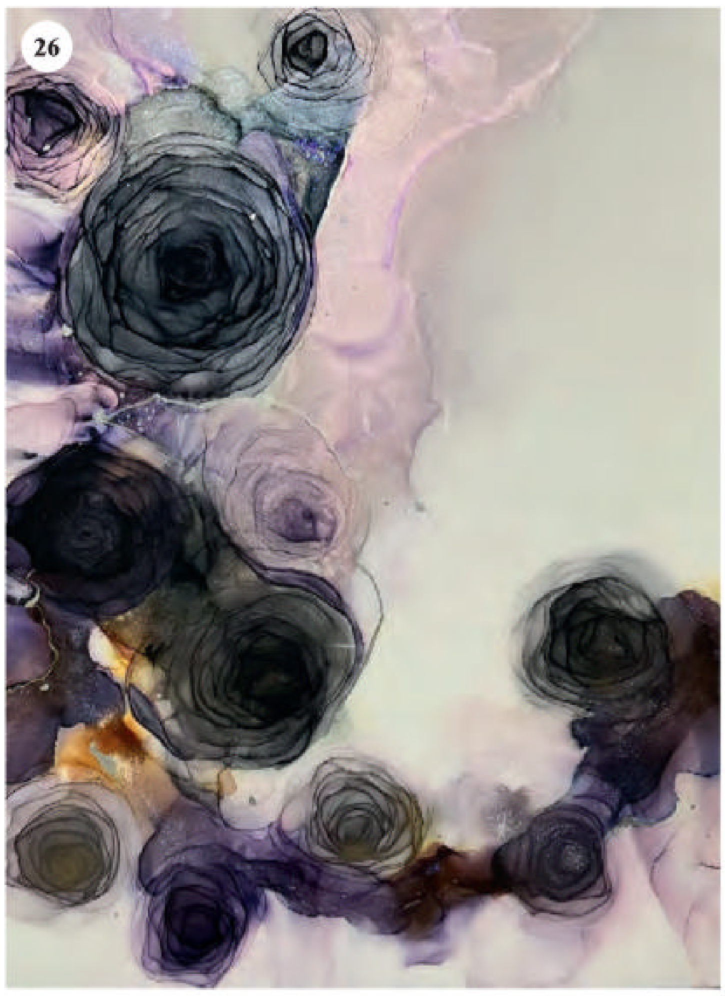
21. JOSEFIN HILL is an artist based in Stockholm, Sweden. She is an abstract expressive painter but her works also range from abstract to figurative. Colour, and it's inherent qualities, has a strong impact in her paintings and she works in acrylics along with other mediums. Memories, moods, and landscapes, both external and internal, are reflected in the layers of colour and texture. To view her work and exhibitions, visit www.josefinhillart.com or follow @josefinhill.art on Instagram.

22. British artist **LOUISE DUGGAN** has recently returned from Dubai having completed a commission of 9 paintings for The Burj Al Arab Hotel. Louise spent her childhood, living throughout Africa, a colourful country steeped in cultural heritage. This became extremely influential on her work. Her canvas swirls with movement as she skillfully takes you on a journey with spontaneous use of acrylics and various mediums to further expand her visual communication. Visit www.louiseduggan.com and follow @louisedugganartist on Instagram.

23. BRIDGET WEISER is a self-taught contemporary artist based in Los Angeles, California. Through layers of accrued oil and acrylic paints her striking and vivid work creates a space for the viewer to draw inferences from the architecture of their imaginations. For enquiries regarding commissioned work, visit www.bridgetweiserartwork.com or follow @b.weiser on Instagram.

24. SADIE BROCKBANK makes figurative sculptures and collages in a narrative, mythical style. Working with many different mediums, Sadie's work is an expression of her sense of our connectedness with the intricate web of life in which we live. See more of her work @brockbanksadie on Instagram and on www.sadiebrockbank.com

25. JACKIE ALLEN is an American artist and illustrator based in New Jersey. Inspired by themes of femininity and natural beauty, her gouache paintings cover a wide range of subjects, including portraits, interiors and architecture, food, and plant life. Jackie's work is known for its brightly saturated colour palettes and bold forms and embraces a romantic outlook on life. Visit jackie-allen.com and follow @jackie.allen_ on Instagram.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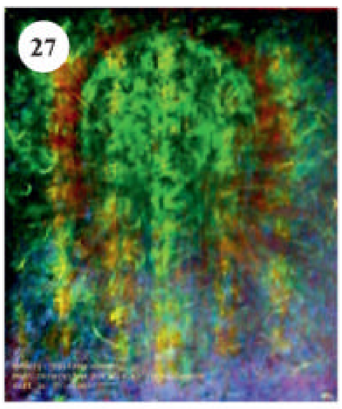
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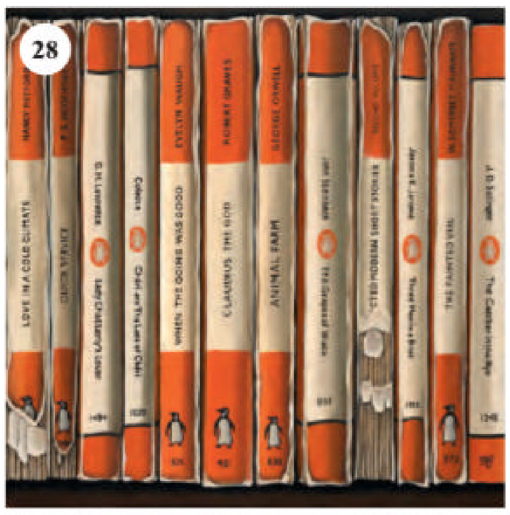
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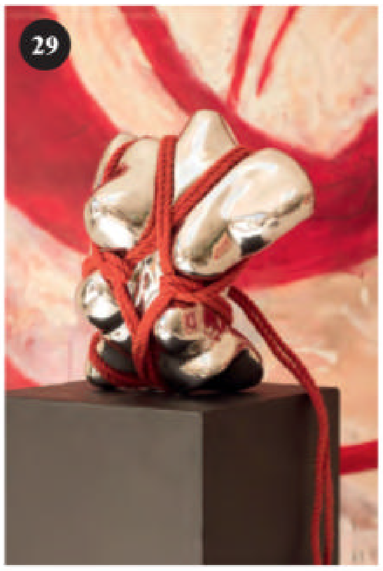
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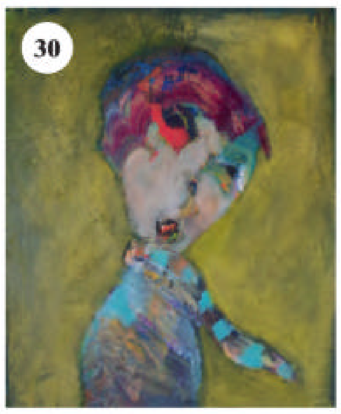
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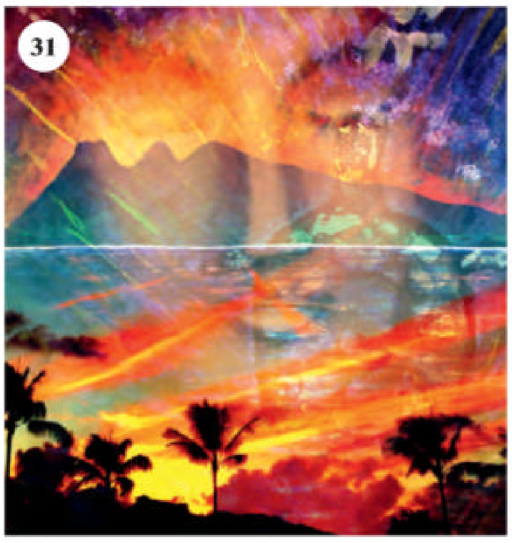
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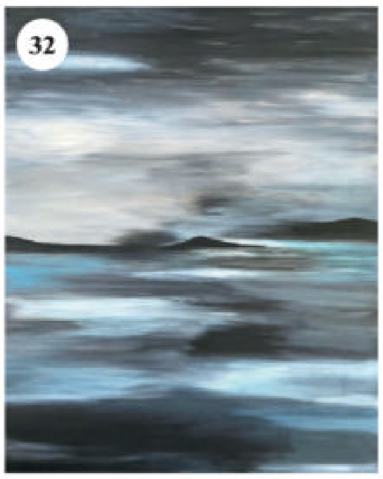
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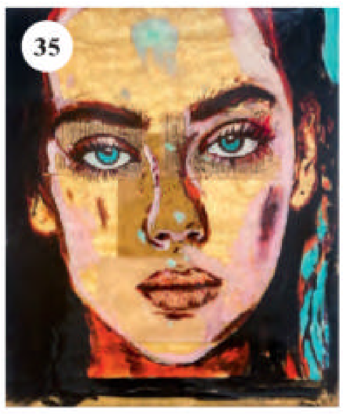
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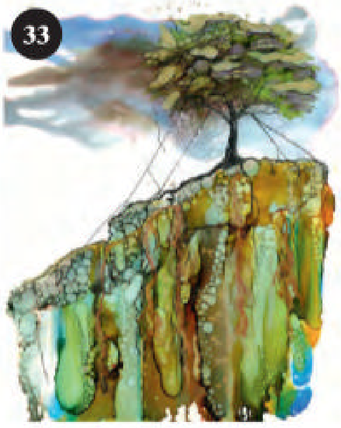
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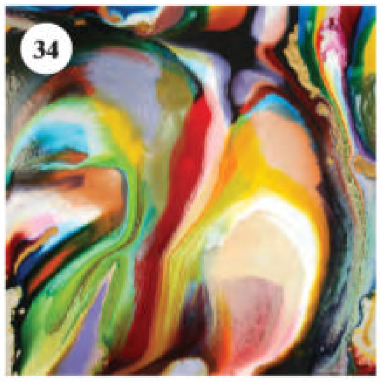
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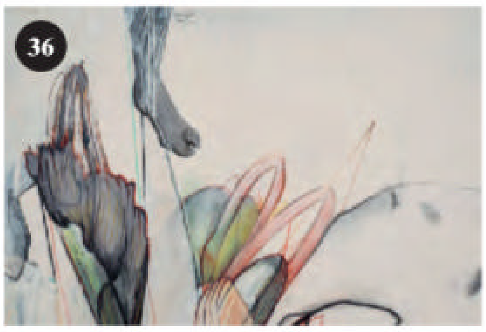
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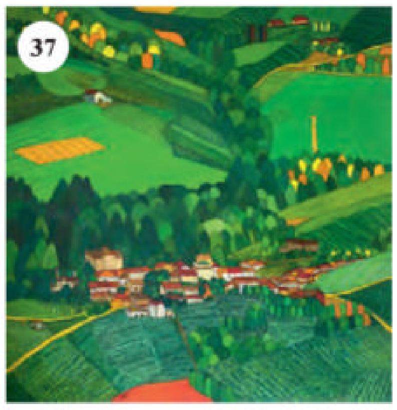
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26. 'Secret Garden' by **LAYLA MOODY**, an American based, abstract artist, interior designer and owner of ArtisticMedia in Texas. She uses vibrant tones, metallics, iridescent paints, with resin finishes, across many styles and mediums. She describes her work as colourful, vibrant, and mood evoking. She is available for commissioned pieces as well. You can find out more at www.laylamoodyartdesign.com and follow @laylamoodyartdesign on Instagram.

27. KARL WEIMING LU is a China born Australian artist of philosophy and science, with backgrounds in civil engineering, psychology, philosophy, international studies, plus 3 masters' degrees in art, design, and architecture. He often combines the Eastern and Western traditions to create unique hybrid style with both oil and Chinese ink brush techniques. "The Memory Series 2002-03" evokes both real and imaginary landscapes where 1980's elite Chinese students pondered philosophy, psychology, literature, political economics, art, and science. Visit www.kwluart.com email kwlu8@hotmail.com and follow @karlweiminglu2 on Instagram.

28. ROO WATERHOUSE specialises in original 'Shelf Portrait' oil paintings. Novel and intriguing, they feature treasured and iconic books, from leather-bound tomes to bestseller paperbacks. Bespoke clients can choose their own favourites to be painted together, building up an insightful and intimate portrait. Which books would you choose? Visit www.roowaterhouse.art follow @roowaterhouseart on Instagram, or email roowaterhouseart@gmail.com

29. CARMEN CLEWS is a British born artist that lives between Cape Town and Bali. Shipping large scale sculptures and mixed media abstracts globally, her artworks symbolise her deep reverence and respect for consciously held practices that lead to a surrender, transformation and ultimately joy. Visit www.carmenclews.com email carmen@carmenclews.com or call +27 760 224475.

30. ALLY LOMBARD is a contemporary artist who paints intuitively, often relying on chance and what she sees in the paint itself. She creates unique pieces that are decorative and the perfect addition to a beautiful interior, but also fascinating in their own right. Find out more at allyhallart.website or email ally.lombard@gmail.com and follow @allyhallart on Instagram.

31. KATHY STANLEY is a Jamaican-born artist living on the US West Coast. A visionary artist and ecopsychology educator, her acrylic paintings and mixed media artworks reflect meditative inner journeys of exploring the ecological self. She gravitates towards images that celebrate earth, the rising feminine spirit and invoke wholeness, joy and aliveness. Shown is 'Sleeping Giant Dreamtime'. Connect with her at SacredArtJourneys.com and follow @kstanleyart on Instagram.

32. LUMINAR, (stage name of Alessia Rampoldi), is a self-taught Italian artist who discovered her talent early in March 2022. Her impulsive art is all about colours, her paintings are a collection of memories, people, places, and emotions. Pictured is "Dopo la pioggia", 40cm x 50cm, acrylic. Find more out at www.lumin-ar.art follow @____luminar on Instagram or email ar.alessia.rampoldi@gmail.com

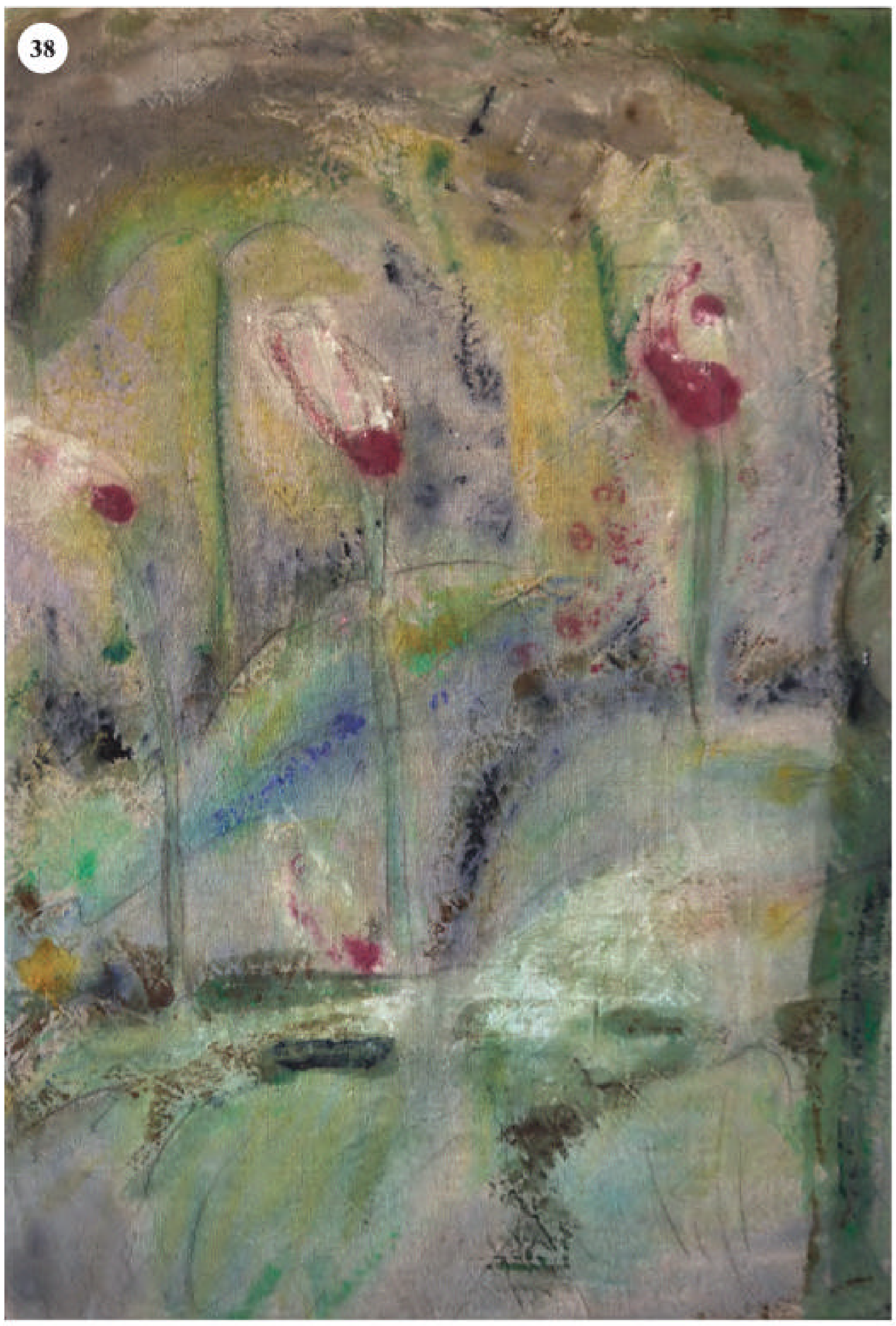
33. JUDY MAYNARD is a California based artist with a 30 year love affair with colour. Having a stained glass background led to a natural metamorphosis to painting with colour dense alcohol inks. Allowing the unpredictability of ink to narrate the composition of each piece, gives Judy an organic, unique approach to her work. Most days you can find her in her Studio Gallery creating bright, creative and innovative art that tell a story of the tapestry of her life. Contact her at artwithjudyann@gmail.com or visit artwithjudyann.com

34. TERESA MARTINS painting may be described in two words: colour and movement. With her abstract painting she aims to create connections with the viewer, allow them to be surprised by each spot of colour. Visit www.teresamartins.com follow @teresa_martins_pintura on Instagram or email mt.cruzmartins@gmail.com

35. ANAÏS CAMILLE says "Each painting I create has its own story and magic". When working with clients for their customised art request, Anaïs ensures that their vision unfolds well in their story. "It's a relationship — a trust in the story that's being told in the artwork," she explains. Order the painting, Annabelle (pictured) at www.anaiscamille.com and follow @anais.creative.world on Instagram.

36. Prague-based artist **JESSICA SERRAN** paints to crack open fixed notions of identity in favour of what feels true to life – a constant, messy and ever-evolving state of becoming. She scribbles, makes marks, and splashes paint on the canvas to get beneath the surface of our otherwise well-polished, edited and fixed ideas of self. Visit www.jessicaserran.com or follow @jessica.serran on Instagram.

37. This commission, "Italian town of Barolo in Piedmont Wine Country" painted by **GRETA WATERMAN** exemplifies her unique cubistic style mixed with fauvism in bright colours. She paints in oil and on a large format. This painting has balance and colour and is 48″ square or 122 cm. Email gsw222@mail.com or visit www.artbygreta.org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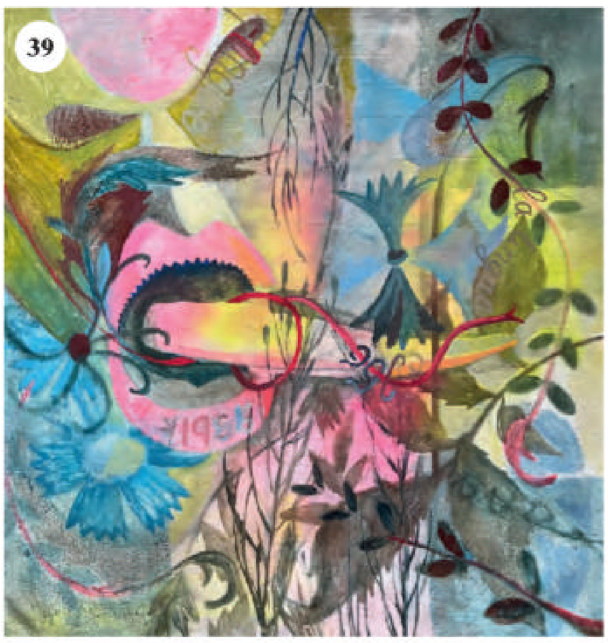
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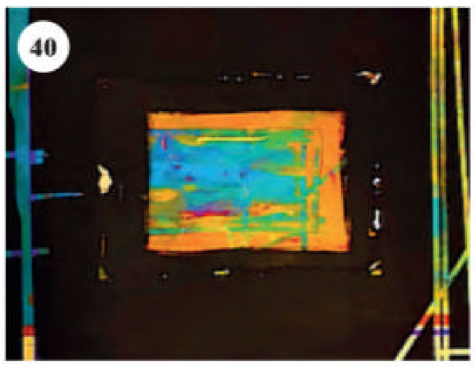
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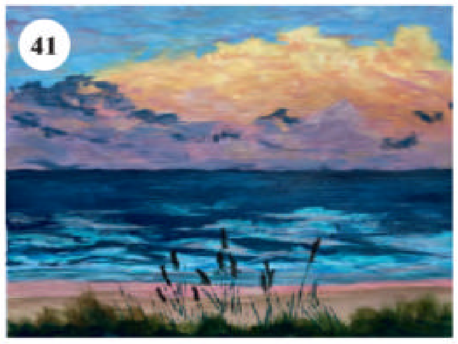
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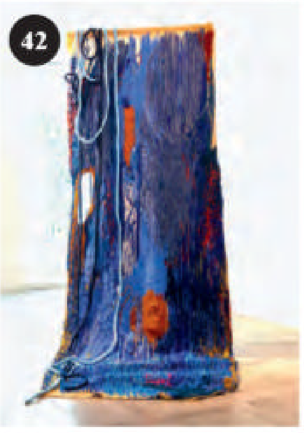
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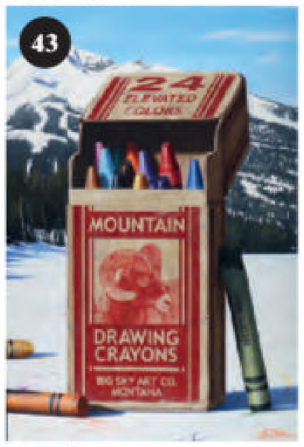
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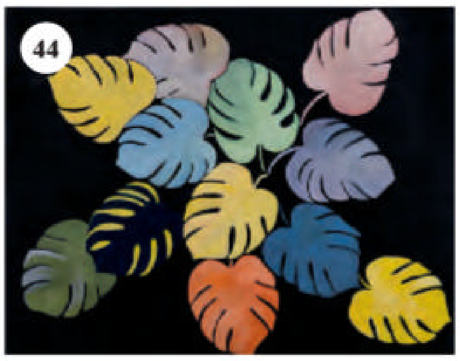
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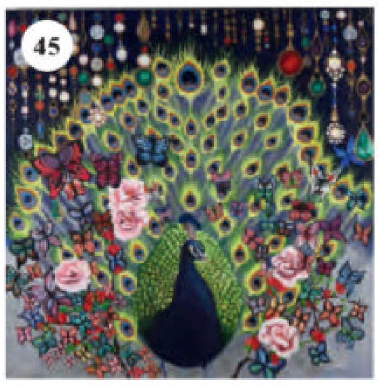
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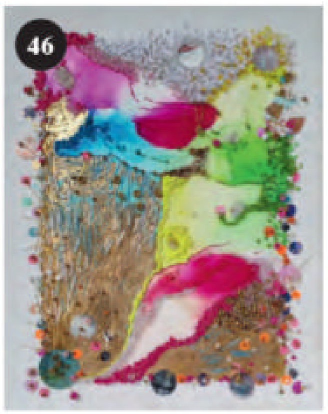
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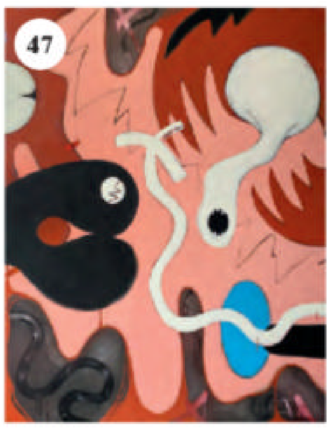
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38. With an MFA from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a background in design, **VANESSA BALBACH CLARKE**, examines limits of landscape. After long walks in nature, she paints unnoticed and quiet transitions. Activating quiet spaces underscores the necessity for making the invisible seen, condemning false historical narratives. Visit vbalbachclarke.com call + 1 847 609 8428 and follow @vbalbachclarke on Instagram.

39. VALENTINA SAMUS studied art history and textile design, worked as interior decorator and painted on silk for many years until she moved to the Bavarian Alps and discovered oil painting as a medium. Her main source of inspiration is nature with a big portion of self reflection and reflection on current events. Samus trusts her intuition when choosing motifs for work. She sees painting as a process of unwinding a thread of an untold story, looking for meanings and symbols and deciphering them. Visit www.valentinasamus.com and search valentinasamus on www.saatchiart.com

40. SKYII DE MONTFORD-SELFRIDGE is a British mixed media artist who creates powerfully captivating imagery. Here in "Monet's Water Lilies with Sharks" he explores a darker side of its romanticism and links to modern human life with a casual hint of humour. Skyii has sold internationally and is also an interior re-styler. Visit www.skyiicloud.com

41. AUBREY GRAY, founder of Little Mama Gray's Brush, is an emerging artist whose work is characterised by bold and complimentary colours within landscape paintings, whether through impressionism or expressionism. This piece, titled "burn", is a 8″ x 10″ acrylic painting on textured paper, of a particularly vibrant spring sunset, and inspired by a song. Follow @little.mama.grays.brush on Instagram or visit LittleMamaGraysBrush.com

42. DIVYA SHARMA is a London based artist from South India. Divya draws inspiration from her lived experiences to highlight larger political and social issues as a woman, and an immigrant. In her tufted tapestries indigenous worldviews and vernacular codices are presented through the lens of living in and between different spaces, cultures, and languages. Visit www.artbydivya.com and follow @divyasharmastudio on Instagram.

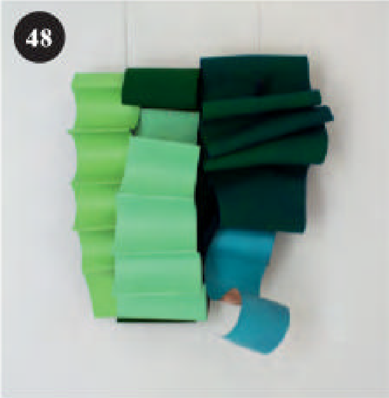
43. COURTNEY COLLINS FINE ART specialises in the exhibition and sale of contemporary Western art and contemporary photography. The Gallery works with established and emerging artists in Montana and across the globe working in a range of mediums from painting to sculpture to photography. The artists are chosen for their many years of deep dedication to their work. This allows for a thought-provoking and engaging Gallery experience for clients when they connect with that special piece. Visit www.courtneycollinsfineart.com or email courtney@coloristhemedicine.com

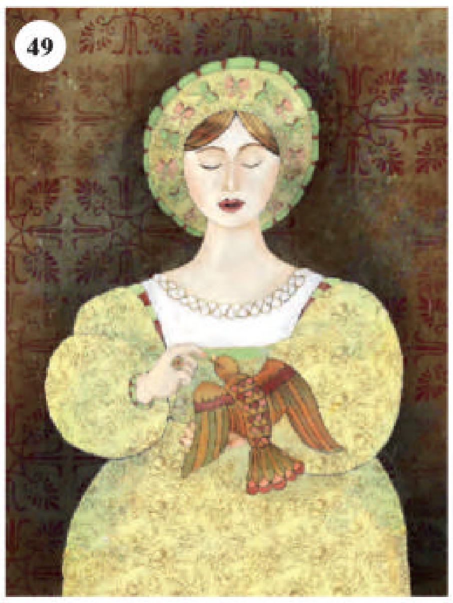
44. NINA LIEMOLA was born in 1972, in Helsinki, Finland. Her artistic works are studies of metamorphosis in nature, abstracts in mixed media. Nina also works with soapstone and textiles. Nina's exhibitions since 2015 are well visited every year in Finland and also in 2018 in Stockholm. Artist residencies in France and Italy give her a lot of inspiration in her colours and style. Visit ninaliemola.com or contact nina.liemola@gmail.com to find out more. Pictured is 'Leafs of life', oil on black canvas, 100cm x 130cm, 2021.

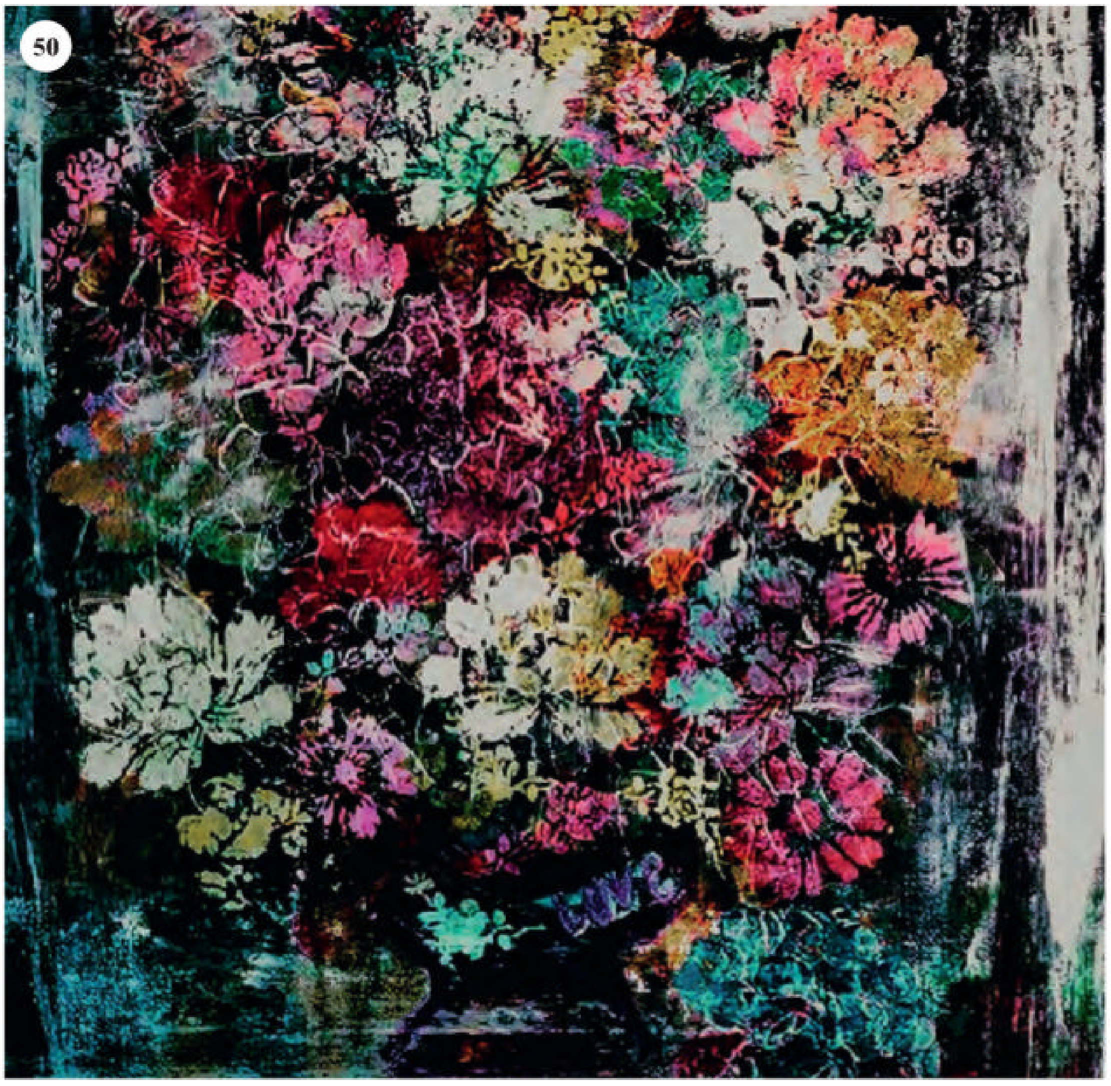
45. GEORGINA FUNNELL is a British artist based in Oxfordshire. A graduate from the University of Arts London (2021), exhibiting work in Saatchi Gallery (2020), winner of the People's Choice award in the Bath Royal Academy (2009). Working primarily in oil on canvas, her work focuses on the themes of the natural world and places of geographic interest. Stylistically inspired by impressionism, surrealism blurred with photorealism. Visit www.georginasgallery.co.uk email georginasgallery@gmail.com and follow @georginasgallery on Instagram.

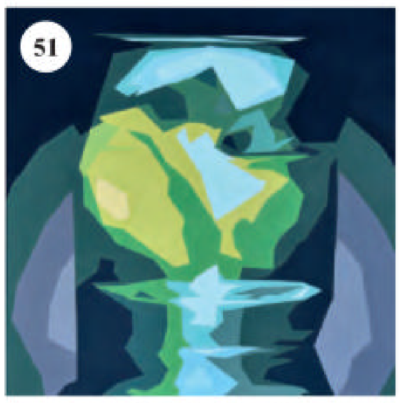
46. MANOELA GRIGOROVA is a Bulgarian born, London-based artist creating colourful, textural pieces depicting abstract scenes inspired by nature. Her joyful pieces come alive through layering paint, embroidery and beading. Manoela champions sustainability and the environment as she interweaves unusual, repurposed and salvaged materials in her works. To see more, visit www.mojoandmuse.co.uk or follow @mojoandmuse on Instagram.

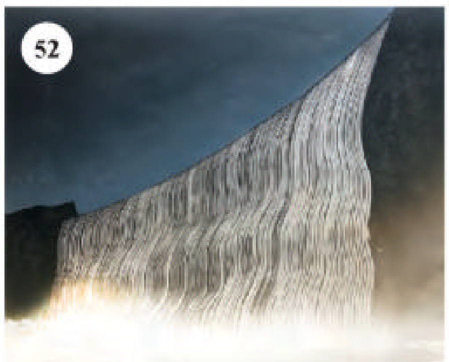
47. HANNAH THOMAS is a British semi-abstract artist, currently working out of a studio in Wiltshire, UK. Her bold, confrontational works explore ideas of Absurdism and are an existentialist call for freedom. Her paintings are statement pieces and she has collectors at home and abroad. For enquiries about work or studio visits, email art@hannahthomas.net or visit www.hannahthomas.net and follow @hannahthomasstudio on Instagram.

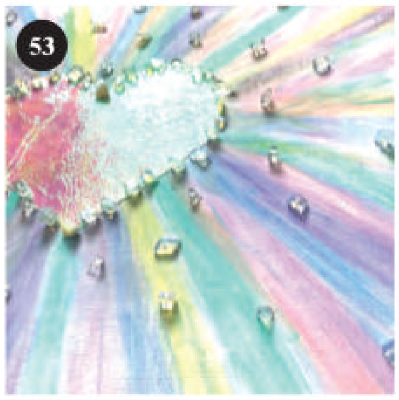


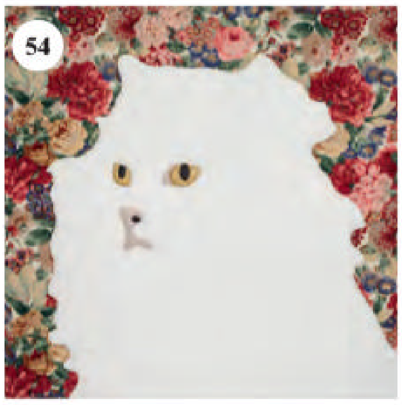


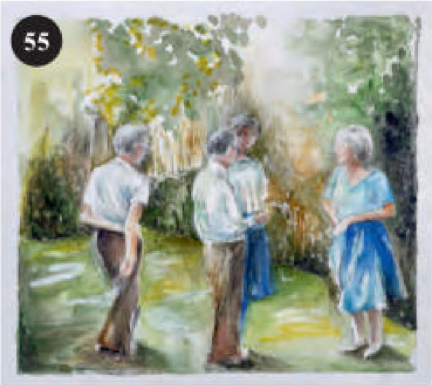


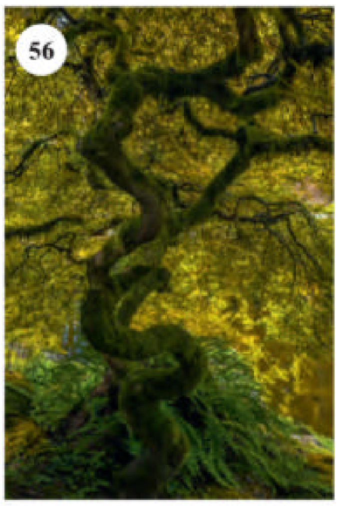


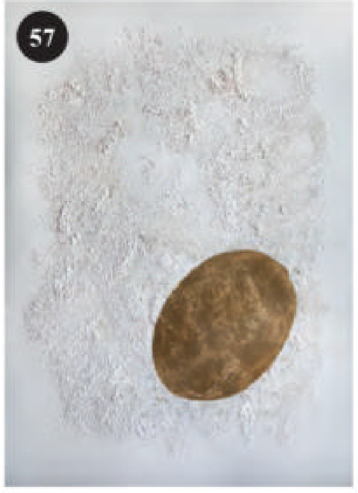


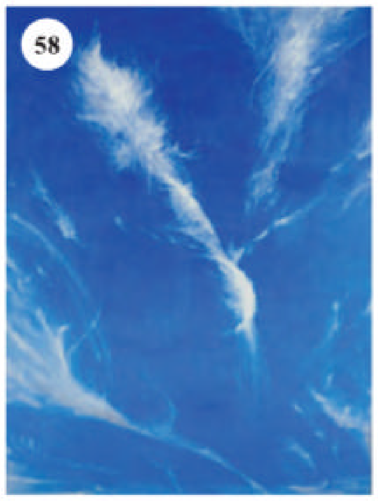












48. LOUISE MCRAE has a fluid art and spatial sculpture practice encompassing many areas of the material world. An alchemist of materials, she transforms one form into another unexpected form, bringing a sense of wonder, intrigue, and hope. Visit www.louisemcrae.co.nz and follow @louisemcrae11 on Instagram.

49. KIM PHILPOTTS is a visual artists based in Stratford upon Avon. She describes her whimsical limited edition prints as Illustrations for Untold Stories. Discover more about Kim's fantastical world with its cast of extraordinary characters at www.kimphilpotts.co.uk and follow @kimphilpotts on Instagram.

50. STEPHANIE DILLON has developed a bold style that gives voice to her passion and allows her to share her experience of pain, joy, and grief; but most importantly, her profound gratitude for life. An incredibly prolific Minnesota based artist, Stephanie Dillon started painting to lend her voice to promoting social justice and bring attention to the issues where we should all be demanding equity. She uses many mediums including salvaged and reclaimed supplies, aerosol, collage, and digital. Her images give colour to the stories that were once invisible, and celebrate the chance to discover unexpected beauty in the world. For more on Stephanie, visit StephanieDillonArt.com or enquire at contact@stephaniedillon.com Follow @fleurdejunkart on Instagram and @fleurdejunk on Facebook.

51. VALERIE TIMMONS is an American painter whose work includes expressionism, minimalism and geometric abstraction. While her paintings vary in style, their unifying element is a resonance that finds beauty in non-representational form and colour or the clean serenity of a still life. You'll find Valerie's work at timmonsart.com and by following @valerietimmonsart on Instagram.

52. The woodblock printmaker **ROD NELSON** finds that this ancient medium has a unique quality and potential. His work, currently about light and water, has been exhibited at the Royal Academy, in New York and in Shanghai. Discover more at www.rodnelson.studio

53. SOPHIE HANNAH WALKER makes custom abstract art designed to create positivity in your home or business. Using a selection of your own images, colour matching to décor, numerology and hidden symbolism plus gemstones and crystals, your magical canvas awaits. Go to sophiehannahwalker.com and click positivity paintings for your free brochure, or follow @sophiehannahwalker on Instagram.

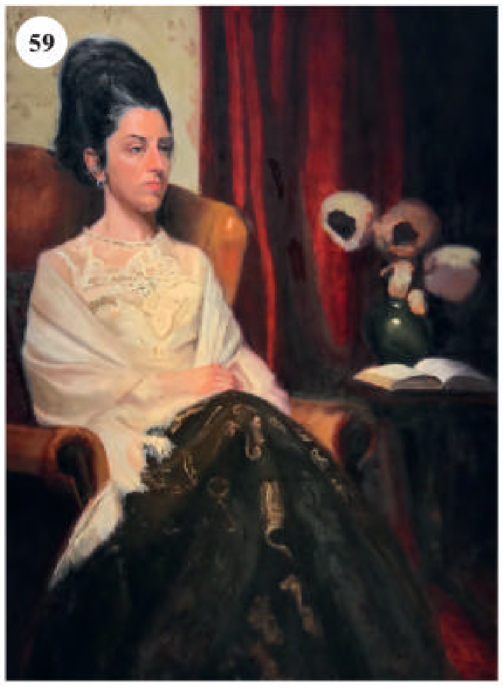
54. NINA SAUNDERS is a Danish multi-media artist based in the UK. Her ambitious creations are not only extremely witty, but also boast an elegant and mysterious character. Nina's works are represented in a number of museum collections in Europe and the USA. Visit www.ninasaundersdk.uk and follow @saunders_studio on Instagram. Pictured is "Pale as Sh*t", White cat on floral background, mixed media, 104cm x 100cm x 5cm.

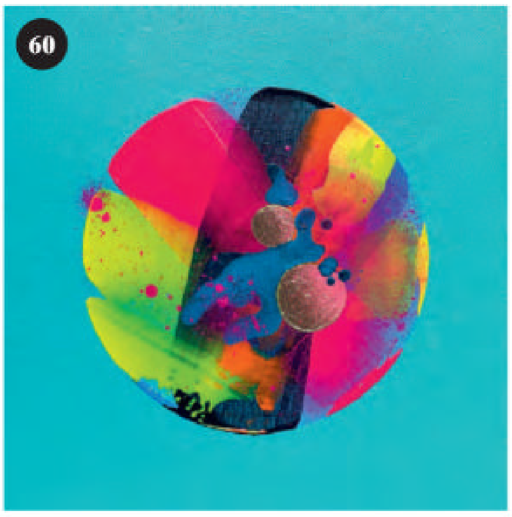
55. LOUISE OPENSHAW is a fine artist, her work embraces detailed fragments of time from autobiographical and cultural memory. Her paintings of abstract, dreamlike images with patterns of light, create a momentary recall, often stories from family photographs. Visit www.louiseopenshaw.co.uk to find out more.

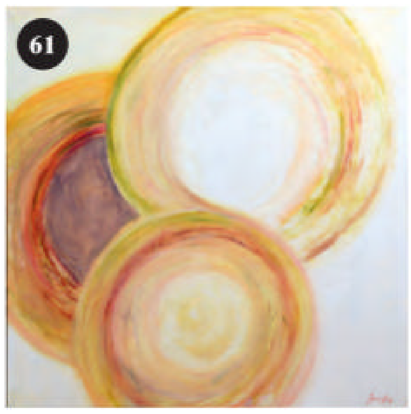
56. ALEXIA ROUSSE is a fine art landscape and nature photographer based in the US. Her love for our magical planet transcended into a love for photography and a mission to share its beauty with others. Alexia is known for creating stunning images of epic proportions. Her work can be found hanging in some of the most exquisite homes, elite restaurants and private businesses across the world. Every piece is made to order, handcrafted, and meticulously inspected to ensure the superior quality, colour brilliance, and shine that will last for years to come. Learn more at AlexiaRousse.com

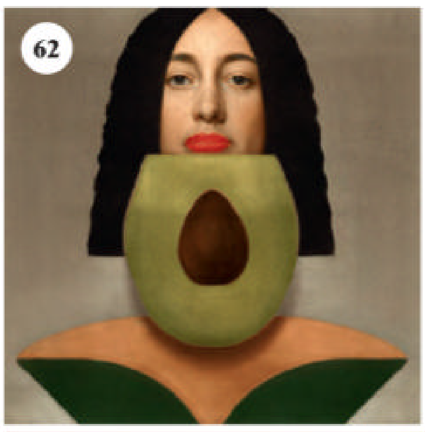
57. CATARINA MENDONÇA is a Portuguese artist, who finds her inspiration in whiteness. She explores the white as a representation of the limitless potential. Playing with light as a material to generate shadows to create beauty and subtlety. Through abstract art, Catarina seeks to stimulate hers and the viewer's senses. Her work is a space for imagination and expression of one's individuality. Space for beauty, but not necessarily for the beautiful. An ambiguous canvas pooled with the uncertain. Her work is both simple, yet complex. Call +351 967 757457 email Catarina.creative@gmail.com or visit catarinamendonca.com

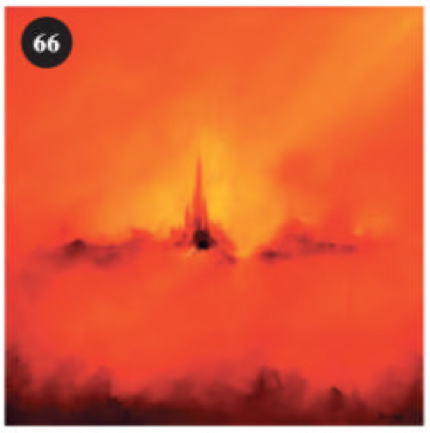
58. Oil painter **LYNN BUDNY** is inspired by nature's dramatic skies and ever-changing ocean. Based in Vancouver, Canada her translucent canvases reflect emotions and her personal journey. Pictured is 'Release'. See her vibrant works at lynnbudny.com follow @lynnbudnyfineart on Instagram or email lynnbudny@gmail.com

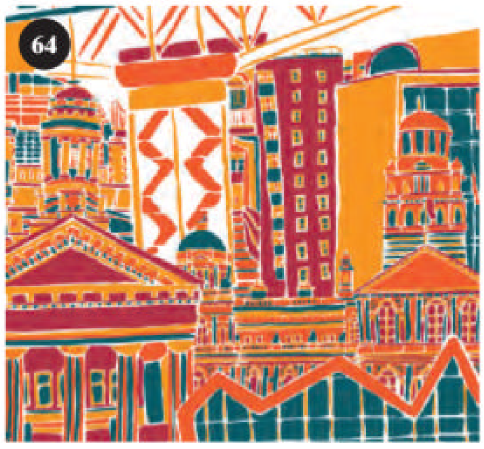


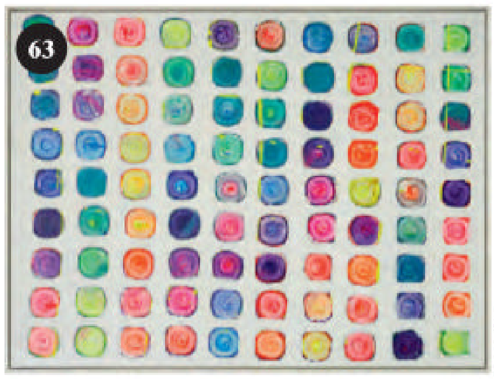


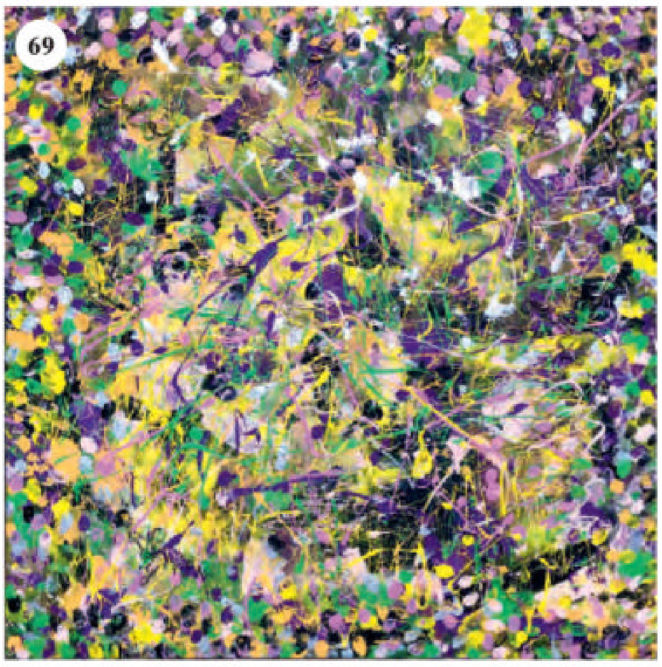


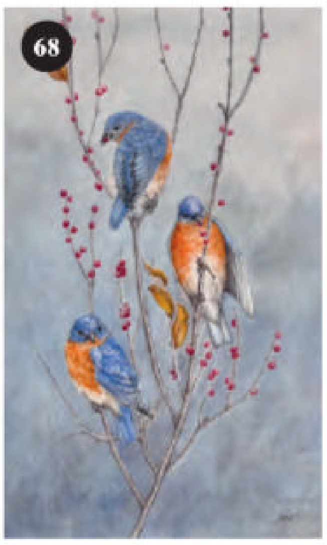


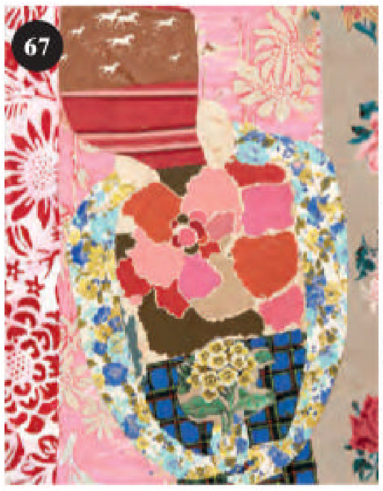












59. CHANTAL VAN DEN BRINK (CHABRI) came to painting late in life, after a career as personal coach, author, and teacher. In her work, she combines classical oil techniques with a contemporary touch, exploring the connection between people and their souls, seeking that often so elusive psychological depth. Visit www.chantalvandenbrink.com to find out more.

60. EMMA CONNOLLY's work is inspired by the evocative Essex and Suffolk landscapes - the places she calls home. The East Anglian vistas of vast horizons and rolling fields give her an ever changing colour palette to work from. She loves the way the seasons change her natural surroundings constantly. Emma's practice is abstract with a hint of something familiar, primarily working in paint or mono-screen printing techniques. Each piece is a one-off original; capturing a time, a place or a feeling from a stolen moment. Find out more at emmaconnollyart.com or follow @emmaconnollyart on Instagram.

61. JANE H – ART FOR YOUR LIFE is a shaman and artist who creates abstract paintings that unite the power of colour and the invisible world of energy. She creates contemporary canvases that are perfect for modern interiors. Jane lives in the Czech Republic and works with European galleries. You can choose from ready-made paintings or commission a piece. Find out more at janeh.com or follow janehatelier on Instagram.

62. Through her multidisciplinary practice, **SEPHORA VENITES** explores the perception of reality and the subjective experiences and interpretations of human nature. Inspired by Dadaism and Surrealism, her work aims to offer a new, metaphorical journey for the audience, using disjointed figures at the boundary of representation and abstraction to navigate the world as a female subject. Visit www.sephoravenites.com and follow @sephoravenites on Instagram.

63. American Artist **LILY PERRY** creates bold and engaging paintings through a free experimental process. She paints with different mediums including acrylic, house paint, graphite, sharpies and pastels. She often adds unexpected elements such as glass or duct tape to her work and enjoys exploring contrast and scale. Her work can be found in galleries and private collectors' homes internationally. Find out more at lilyperryfineart.com and follow along @lilyperryfineart on Instagram.

64. CAITLIN ELIZABETH is a Scottish artist who graduated from the renowned Design for Textiles course at Heriot Watt in Galashiels. Her vibrant and striking prints of Glasgow capture the bright, energetic personality of the city. Find out more at caitlinelizabethtaylor.com or follow @caitlinelizabethtextiles on Instagram.

65. AMY WILTON is a fine art photographer living in Maine, USA. She has a Master's Degree in Photography from Maine Media College, where she developed a style that is thoughtful and inquisitive. Her images provoke more questions than can be answered in one viewing, prompting viewers to return regularly. Her images have been exhibited throughout the US and at galleries in Italy and Spain. Visit www.amywiltonphotography.com and search amywiltonphotograph on Facebook and follow amywiltonphotography on Instagram.

66. MARIA ISABEL DE LINCE was born in Bogotá, Colombia and studied Art and Architectural Design at the Javeriana University. María studied drawing and painting at Co-operartes and with masters: David Manzur, Fernando Dávila and Miguel Moyano. Her work has been exhibited in important spaces in Colombia, the United States, Europe and Asia. She has also received national and international recognition. Visit www.mariaisabeldelince.com and follow @midelince on Instagram.

67. With collage, paint, and a variety of printing methods, **JESSICA WEISS** applies patterns as one might use a brush stroke. In an abstract construct, a narrative seed is planted with these ready-made designs, ripe with suggestion and association. It is a playful back and forth process of discovery and construction. Jessica achieves an evocative form in a believable space. These scavenged and collected materials bring a history, texture, physicality and sometimes humour to her work. Find out more at www.jessicaweiss.net or follow @jessicaweisspaint on Instagram.

68. AMY VELDMAN-WILSON is an American artist based in Block Island, off the coast of Rhode Island. Her captivating and colourful works are the result of her observations of nature. From refined details to bold brush strokes we are presented with an artwork that entices us to feel present in the moment and share in the artist's interpretation. Her love and appreciation of birds and the sea become apparent. Amy's work has been exhibited and awarded in David Shepherds Wildlife artist of the year and Leigh Yawkeys annual International Birds in Art exhibition at the Woodson Art Museum. Visit www.veldmanwilsonfineart.com search Artwork by Amy Veldman-Wilson on Facebook and follow @veldmanwilson on Instagram.

69. GERALDINA KHATCHIKIAN is an Italian abstract painter and jewellery designer living and working in Milan, Italy. Her abstract process revolves around the concept of inner research, awareness and healing. All her canvases are the result of an emotional journey that describes the preciousness of the inner world through explosion of colours mixed together with the world of metals. This painting is titled "Trust Your Intuition", 100cm x 100cm and is part of the collection exhibited in her latest solo exhibition "Authenticity" at the Jewelry Boutique "Giulio Veronesi" in Bologna, Italy. See more online at www.geraldinakhatchikian.com and follow @g.khatchikian.art on Instagram, or email geraldin.khatchikian@gmail.com

1. VICTORIA MORRIS's work is both refined and minimalist while allowing space for the subtle variations and imperfections inherent to handmade pottery. Timelessly elegant, her lamps and vessels can be found in hotels, restaurants and private collections through out the world. Visit www.victoriamorrispottery.com or follow @victoriamorrispottery on Instagram.

2. Organic structures, fluctuating shapes, animated labyrinths, symmetries… this is **RITA MIRANDA**'s world. Contemplation of nature's shapes is her vital nourishment, from the deep abyss to the vegetal microcosm. Elective affinities with those lines, those rhythms, those spaces out of time, that synthesis, minimal but full of experience. For more info contact studio@ritamiranda.com visit www.ritamiranda.com and follow @rita_miranda_ceramics on Instagram.

3. MITSU MAKES by Mitsuka Shimazu has channelled her personal experiences of trauma and the healing process into creating unique, elegant, hand thrown pieces that evoke emotion, nostalgia and peace. She's hope to continue expanding her practice inspired by life. Follow @mitsu.makes on Instagram to learn more.

4. 'Iconoclast' is a unique sculptural piece by ceramic artist, **MEGAN ADAMS** from her selection "Tales Old and New." Her work has been exhibited in the V&A, the Affordable Art Fair, Bankside Gallery and The Ice House. You can see more by visiting her website, mmadams.art or following @mmadamsstudio on Instagram. For further information, email her at ceramics@3stag.com

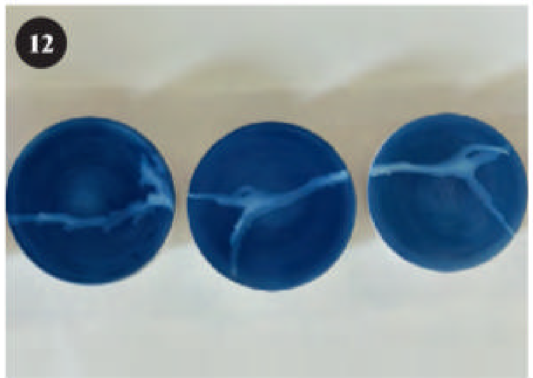
5. BOUGH HOUSE creates hand built ceramics that take inspiration from the beauty of the natural world. The ceramicist, Robin Benson, hopes you'll find a joyfulness in her interpretation of creatures and trees. A percentage of each sale go to charities that support environmental and animal protection and conservation. Visit www.bough.house and follow @bough.house on Instagram.

6. ISABELLE ROSE items are made from natural materials like cotton, porcelain and ceramic as we care for the planet. You can never go wrong with some retro Polka dots items or lovely flower patterns. Patterns come and go, but Polka dots will never go out of style. Visit www.isabellerosehome.com and follow @Isabellerosehome on Instagram.

7. CELAINE CONCEPTS present their newest design, the Bottega Curve, made in Italy. Inspired by the waves of the ocean, the curves will surprise you every time they catch the light. Sometimes in the waves of change we find our true direction, and this design is all about that. For more details, visit www.celaineconcepts.com or follow @celaineconcepts on social media.

8. Erika Austria is a ceramicist and founder of **LARO CERAMICS**. Based in the Philippines, Erika has sparked a renewed interest in pottery through her clay play kits. Her wellness dinnerware sets showcase a unique and playful style within the local ceramic community. Visit laro-ceramics.com and follow @laro.ceramics on Instagram.

9. ANNABEL TALBOT creates unique ceramic objects that question the standardisation of design and form. The development of ideas and processes, define her artistic response. Drawing on the past for inspiration and working in ceramic stoneware, she produces work that has a distinctive and characteristic style. Visit www.annabeltalbot.com and follow @annabeltalbotceramics on Instagram.



10. LANA KOVA is a NYC based artist. She is known for stoneware hand painted in dots, "caviar" porcelain and meticulously carved sculptures. Lana always pushes what's possible in ceramics, making her pieces large and thin and endlessly experimenting with glazes. Visit www.lanakova.com or follow @lana_kova_studio on Instagram to learn more.

11. OLWEN THOMAS CERAMICS makes hand-built porcelain vessels and sculptural wall pieces inspired by Welsh textiles. Using a monoprint technique to create a uniquely patterned porcelain 'fabric', Olwen then forms this into delightful cups, jugs, vases and fabulous wall artwork. Commissions welcomed. Visit online shop www.olwenthomas.com follow @olwenthomasceramics on Instagram or call 07957 656367.

12. AMRITA KARUNARATNE is a ceramist based in Hoorn, The Netherlands, who creates one-off ceramic pieces inspired by daily life and organic shapes in nature. Amrita specialises in unique throwing techniques developed while studying in Dublin. The deep blue finish is achieved through the use of cyanotype. Visit karunaratne.com and follow @kurulla.ceramics on Instagram.

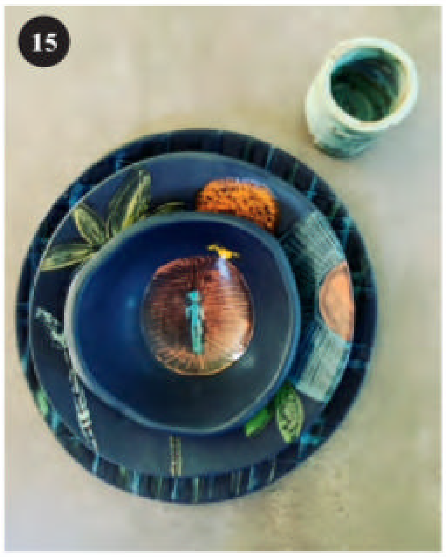
13. SARAH RUTHVEN is a contemporary artist inspired by Southern England's distinctive coastal seascapes. With colours and glazes reflecting the shoreline's seasonal colours, textures, and atmospheres, her hand-wheel thrown ceramics combine elemental beauty, craftsmanship and functionality. Sarah takes commissions. Visit www.sarahruthven.co.uk/ceramics and follow @sarahruthvenart on Instagram.

13

14. TASH FRY KLĀ aims to harness nature into functional, tactile objects. Tash's hand-built work focusses on the importance of our hands and our earth's materials as tools for creation, and is a celebration of innate, intuitive practice. Designed for everyday use, her tableware and lifestyle pieces aim to bring awareness and slower pace to simple moments. Discover more at www.tashfrykla.com and follow @tashfry_kla on Instagram.

14

15. LISA NEIMETH is a California/New Mexico based artist who creates tableware depicting random still lives of found objects, scenarios, curios and iconic images all impressed and etched into clay. These plates tell stories as she creates small tableaus that become permanently recorded on this rustic yet refined contemporary tableware. Visit lneimeth.com or follow @lisaneimethceramics on Instagram to find out more.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16. Australian artist **FIONA HISCOCK** creates finely painted hand built vessels depicting the stunning biodiversity of her local environment. Large in scale, each work stands tall at 45 cm, aiming to draw attention to the beauty and fragility of Australia's unique habitat. Fiona spends time in the bush observing and making preliminary paintings prior to committing to clay. She has a keen birdwatcher's eye to ensure the details are correct! Visit www.fionahiscock.com or follow @fionahiscoc on Instagram.

16

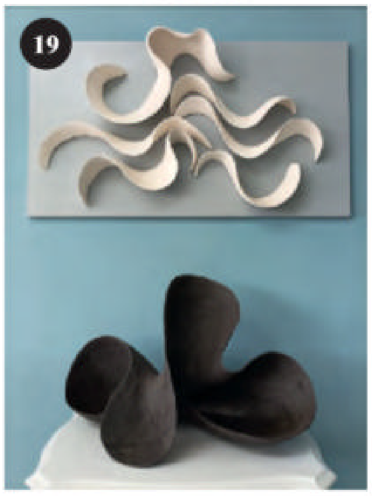
17. London based, **ROBERT SILVER**'s stylish, functional pottery has 'attitude.' Lots of it. Using traditional techniques, such as throwing and turning on a potter's wheel, slabbing and hand dipping glazes, he produces a look that is both urban and very contemporary. For more information, visit www.robertsilverpottery.co.uk or email robert@robertsilverpottery.co.uk Photo credit to: Anna Hindocha/Warm Glow Photo.

17

18. EVA COCCO is an Italian self-taught artist with an architectural background based in New York City, Rome and the Hamptons. Inspired by folklore heroines of her Italian heritage Eva creates otherworldly anthropomorphic sculptures of soulful and radiant beauty. Porcelain is the primary medium, carved and stressed at its limit for creating unexpected and surprising results enhanced by gas kiln reductions. Eva's pieces are exhibited between New York and Tokyo. Visit the website at www.evacocco.com or follow @3va_c on Instagram for more.

18

19. KATHERINE STAPLES makes bespoke wall pieces and sculptures out of clay for commission to any budget, size and colour, for interior and exterior display. For more information, contact her at katherinestaples@outlook.com or call 07760 427758. Discover more at www.katherinestaples.com or follow @katherinestaples.sculpture on Instagram.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20. Hand thrown on the coast in West Cornwall, Anna's exquisite pieces are functional, complementing the surroundings they are placed in. Inspired by travel and her passion for hospitality. Each piece is unique and designed with purpose and vision to enhance an interior. Her shop **LINENANDCLAY** is in the fashionable Georgian Chapel street in Penzance. Visit www.linenandclay.com email linenandclay@gmail.com and follow @linenandclay on Instagram.

20

21. NICOLA CORNFORD CERAMICS. Inspired by the beautiful floral gowns by Oscar de la Renta, this artwork reveals the delicate texture captured in the unglazed porcelain flowers and leaves. This unique work is 72cm x 76cm, to see close up images of this artwork, and others, visit nicolacornfordceramics.com and follow @bluebutterflyceramics on Instagram.

21

22. Fiona Cuthbert O'Meara is an award winning contemporary ceramicist who handcrafts unique functional and sculptural ceramics. Bringing the beauty of the wild outdoors into your living spaces, Fiona is the founder of **NATUREMUSE CERAMICS**: an ecologically sustainable teaching studio located on the Sunshine Coast, Australia. Visit www.naturemuse.com.au or follow @fionacuthbertomeara_naturemuse on Instagram.

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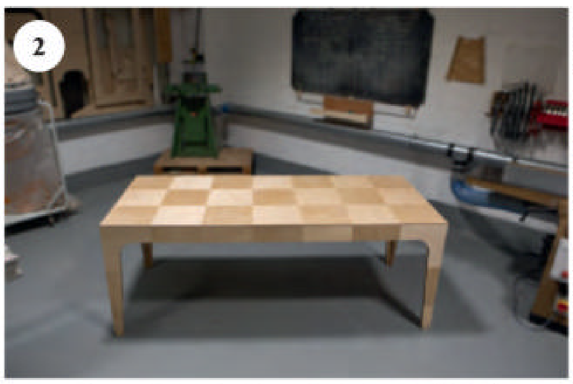
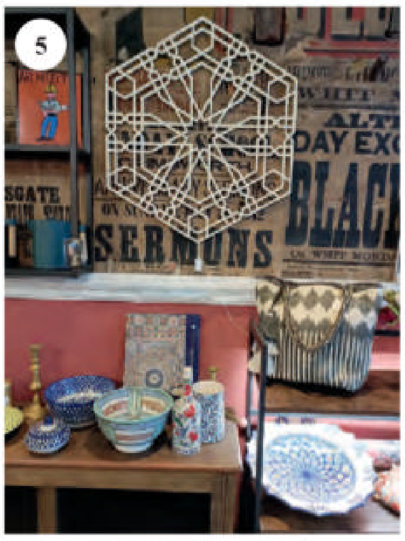


1. DENTON ANTIQUES have a fascinating range of antique chandeliers, lanterns and wall lights. All of their pieces are on display to see at Kensington Church Street where you can also browse their glassware and objets d'art. Each unique piece has been expertly restored and takes LED bulbs. Visit denton-antiques.co.uk or follow @dentonantiques on Instagram.

2. GEORGE GOLD + CO make furniture for life on the home frontier. 'Utility with sunshine' is how one customer described their work. This 'Harlequin' table is available to order in alternate parquetry patterns and sizes. Visit www.georgegold.co to see their work or contact hello@georgegold.co to discuss your project.

3. MAISON BOHITI create handmade, artistic soy candles for those who adore art. They are eco friendly, vegan and cruelty free. Discover more by following @maisonbohiti on Instagram or email hello@maisonbohiti.com

4. TRUE FAIR TRADING CIC is a not for profit company that specialises in ethically traded garden pots. These dreamy blue and white pots are called Summer Mist and were hand crafted and individually hand painted in Vietnam. High fired ceramic (1600°c), they are perfect for use as outdoor planters. There are 6 different sizes available to suit any garden/plant, prices start from £59. Visit www.truefairtrading.com and follow @ truefairtradingcic on Instagram.



5. BROUG'S HOMEWARE AND GIFTS curates contemporary and traditional products from the Middle East and North Africa. Established by Eric Broug, author of the bestselling books on Islamic visual culture globally. They find unusual and beautiful things, and if they can't find it, they make it. Get in touch, let them find, curate, or design for you. Visit them in Hebden Bridge or on www.brougs.shop Call 01422 847130 for more details.

6. L'ABATJOURISTE and the Swiss interior designer, Julien Aubert, created the 'Onyx et Soie' lamp pictured. This lamp combines onyx stone and tussah silk from Holland Sherry. Since 1950, the Swiss company, L'Abatjouriste, has produced high-quality, handmade lampshades. Visit www.labatjouriste.ch email info@julienaubert.ch and follow @l_abatjouriste and @julien_aubert_interieurs on Instagram.

7. In recent years, **POOKY** has emerged as one of the most dynamic lighting brands in the UK. With a huge range of table lamps, lampshades, pendants, chandeliers, outdoor lighting and mirrors, they've made a name for themselves by producing beautifully designed and manufactured products at very affordable prices. Visit www.pooky.com

8. FLOREN design unique lampshades using rare vintage textiles and the finest fabrics and designs sourced from suppliers around the world. Favoured by leading designers and decorators, each one is hand-sewn in Dorset by the small team of artisans. All shades are either self-trimmed, or paired with complimentary silk, along with silk linings. Visit www.floren.com or follow @neilsherring on Instagram.

9. MUST HAVE BINS present a stunning collection of hard to find essential home accessories – bins, tissues and jardinières, all beautifully handmade, they are just too good to hide! Visit musthavebins.co.uk or contact 020 3744 2384 to find out more or email info@musthavebins.co.uk

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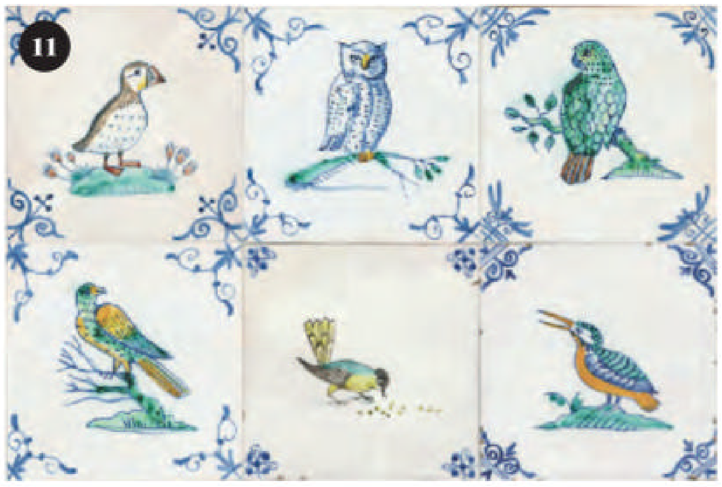
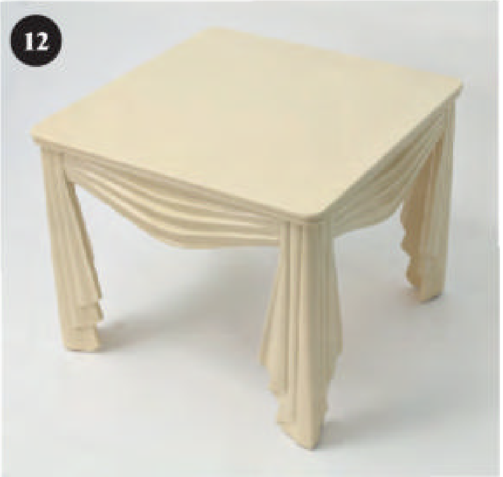
10. HIGHAM FURNITURE are design-obsessed cabinetmakers creating traditional and contemporary framed Shaker kitchens. They have a Parsons Green, London-based design studio where clients feel the quality of the furniture and can create bespoke designs. Everything is made to order by craftspeople using traditional techniques in their Hampshire workshop. Call 020 7381 0488, email info@higham.co.uk or follow @highamfurniture on Instagram.



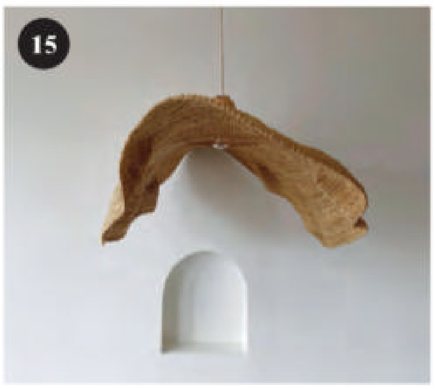
11. THE DOUGLAS WATSON STUDIO offers high quality handmade and hand painted tiles using traditional techniques and a wide range of glazes, colours and styles, from historical and classical sources to original and contemporary designs. Panels and installations, for kitchens, bathrooms and fireplaces, are custom made for each client. For more information, call 01491 629960 or visit www.douglaswatsonstudio.co.uk



12. Alirio Pirela and his Atelier are celebrating this spring the atypical and unexpected; designs and objects that will make spaces multifaceted and inviting, alive with history, culture and modernity. Offering sophisticated medley of styles ranging from American Art Deco to European mid-century masters, and modern emerging artists. **PIRELA ATELIER** is an interior design studio and an inspirational boutique featuring pieces of simplicity, elegance and compelling design that will make a statement this spring and always. Explore the collection at www.pirelaatelier.com and follow @pirelaatelier on Instagram.

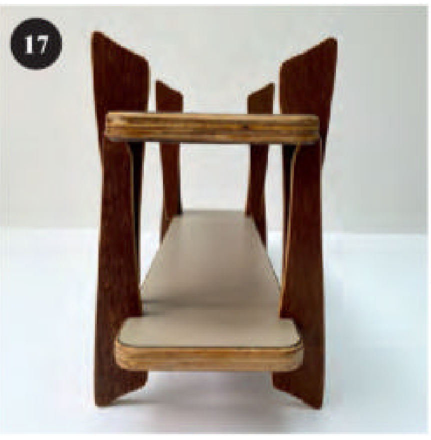
13. The Turkish towels of **OTTOMANIA** are woven with a woolly kind of cotton which absorbs moist very well. The subtly woven flower patterns and hand knotted fringe give the towels a beautiful look. An elegant and strong towel that will look beautiful in your bathroom. Available in four sizes and in various colours. Call +31 237 370426 or visit www.ottomania.nl for more information. Also available wholesale.

14. THE RUG STORE specialises in a wide selection of new, old and antique Persian, Turkish, Caucasian and Turkman carpets. Various antique, old and new kilims are available. They also offer a professional hand-cleaning and restoration service. They buy old and antique carpets – even damaged rugs. Part-exchange and evaluations. Visit 312 Upper Richmond Road West, East Sheen, London, SW14 7JN. Call 020 8876 0070, email info@rugstoreonline.co.uk or view www.rugstoreonline.co.uk



15. Committed to supporting tradition and sustainability, partners Chessa Osburn and Mary Jane Bolton of **TWENTY ONE TONNES** work with artists to create quality handmade products with local natural materials. Visit www.twentyonetonnes.com or follow @twentyonetonnes on Instagram.

16. The work of **SUSAN HARTER MURALPAPERS** radiates peace and timelessness. Susan paints ethereal murals in her US-based studio, and her in-house artisans turn them into printed fine-art wallpaper. Each is arranged to your liking. Printed on archival canvas with extraordinary quality. Visit susanharter.com and follow @susanhartermuralpapers on Instagram. Photograph and interior by Kathy Kuo.



17. DOTTYPIX, two designer makers from North London, make exquisitely crafted pieces that are primal and joyful. Creating lifestyle objects for the future and for the present. A fusion of their collective vision and love for abstract art their work embodies surreal views of what may be. Minimal yet meaningful that's how they roll. Visit www.dottypix.co.uk and follow @dottypix.uk on Instagram.

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18. DEVOL KITCHENS – Designers and makers of handmade English cupboards. deVOL has four beautiful kitchen ranges – The Classic English, Real Shaker, the urban rustic Sebastian Cox Kitchen and the Haberdasher's Kitchen, a range of unpainted oak cupboards inspired by mid-century English interiors. All deVOL furniture is made in Leicestershire and can be viewed at their Cotes Mill headquarters, Tysoe St. and St. John's Square showrooms in London and their showroom on Bond Street, New York. For further information, visit www.devolkitchens.co.uk or call 01509 261000.

19. SAINT SIGNORA is a purveyor of worn splendour and historic beauty. Shopkeeper, Katie Hyatt hand selects perfectly imperfect antique pieces from Europe and the Southern United States. She curates pieces destined for the home, imparting new life to each, while telling the story of life past. Visit www.saintsignora.com for the newest collections and follow @saintsignora on Instagram.

20. ZAZOO DESIGN designs and creates beautiful trays in a range of styles and finishes through the inspiration of renowned designer Katherine Blacker. Styles include lacquers, glazes, patterns and marbling, in a variety of shapes and bold colours. Practical and achingly stylish, and pleasantly priced from £30 to £75, discover more at www.zazoodesign.com and follow @zazoodesign on Instagram.

21. Award winning **BOBO1325** brings biophilic escapism, designed to evoke the senses. Their design aesthetic is dominated through delicately hand painted illustrations with undertones of mischief and rebellion, let's get lost amongst the depths of their decadent design layers. Visit www.bobo1325.com for more and follow @bobo1325 on Instagram.

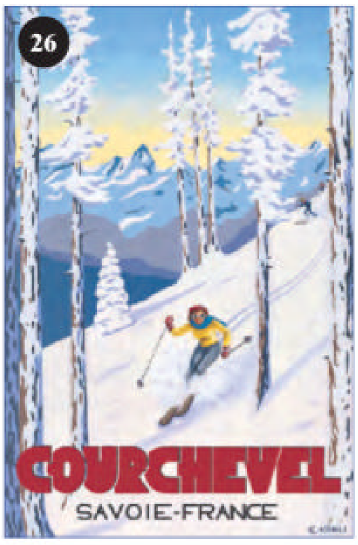
22. SHELF STUDIO brings a new dimension to your walls and will create a maximalist home for your ever growing houseplant family. All shelves are designed and handmade by Sam Chafer in the UK using only sustainably sourced timber, low energy light sources (LED) and eco friendly packaging. Discover more at www.shelfstudio.co.uk and follow @shelfstudiouk on Instagram.

23. SHARA is a small artisan company that specialises in using sustainably sourced wood and recycled agricultural machinery. Their tables can be used both inside and outside as they are finished to a high standard using marine quality resin. Bespoke orders are taken. Discover more at www.sharaconcepts.co.uk and follow @extraordinarytables on Instagram.

24. CASA GUSTO's new Cesta indoor-outdoor dining chair is a familiar design brought back for all occasions. A new introduction of many from the West Palm Beach-based home studio where the old world meets new design at their brick and mortar shop and online at www.getthegusto.com Follow @getthegusto on Instagram for more.

25. BLUE & WHITE COMPANY is an elegant colour company that offers a beautiful range of home accessories and a nightwear collection. This emerging UK brand is inspired by the lineage of blue in art history and celebrates the hues of blue and the marriage of blue and white throughout their designs, a timeless combination that remains much loved across generations. Find out more at www.blueandwhitecompany.com and follow @blueandwhitecompany on Instagram.

26. PULLMAN EDITIONS designs striking original limited-edition posters that capture the enduring appeal of Art Deco. Their posters feature winter sports, glamorous resorts around the world, and historic automobiles. Over 100 designs available at £420 each. Call 020 7730 0547 or view and buy online at www.pullmaneditions.com



27. Born from an industrial tile and marble store, **THE PARMATILE SHOP** leverages 45 years of stone experience to create home décor items that aim to bring a little intention into your otherwise daily routine. They use marble, granite and onyx from around the world to create pieces that are too beautiful to ignore, rendering that routine a ritual. All their pieces are fabricated by hand in Queens, NY. Visit www.theparmatileshop.com (or Wolf & Badger for non US orders), and follow @theparmatileshop on Instagram. For custom furniture requests, email theshop@parmatile.com

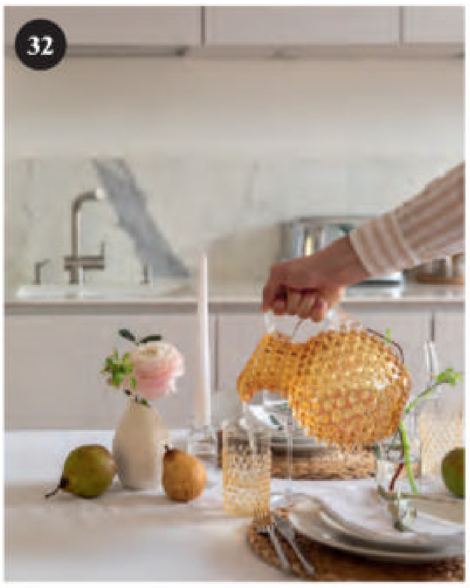
28. TINKER & TALLULAH are a husband and wife duo based in Nottinghamshire who handcraft beautiful fringed lampshades. They offer a bespoke service and will work with you to design your perfect lampshade for your home. Commercial projects are welcome too. Visit www.tinkerandtallulah.co.uk and follow @tinkerandtallulah on Instagram.

29. ANDREW KAY is an award winning sculptor whose work can be seen throughout the world. His life-size sculptures capture the essence of wild animals using deceptively simple form. Visit www.andrewkaysculpture.com or call 07740 306412 to find out more.

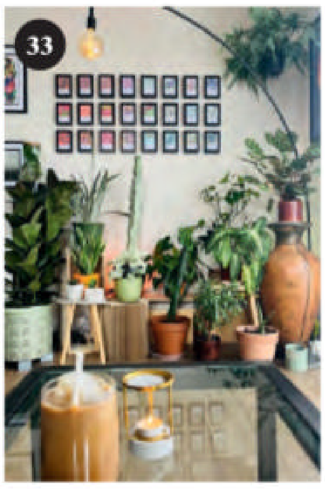
30. Set the scene for elegant dining with **GLAZEBROOK & CO**'s classic "Fiddle" collection – mirror finish Stainless Steel with dishwasher safe cream "square handle" knives. Special offer price £415 for a set for 6 people, that's a 6 x 7 piece place setting (pictured) and 2 tablespoons, including UK delivery. To see this design and more, visit www.glazebrook.com and click "Special Offer", or to order, call 020 7731 7135.

31. ROARK MODERN. Seen here is their 'Arp Lamp' in black bronze finish. Jean Arp, the master of biomorphic forms, was the inspiration for this sensual sculpture turned lamp. A marble resin form hand finished in their signature black bronze finish and buffed with European wax for a lustrous appearance. Measuring 29″ tall x 5″ diameter, priced at $3,200. Discover more of their collection at www.roarkmodern.com and follow @roarkmodern on Instagram.

32. KLIMCHI's Hobnail evokes an ageless vintage style that enchants the eye with its unique and bold design. Originating from their family-run glass factory, every piece is ethically produced using inherited artisan techniques. A modern approach towards the Bohemian glass tradition. An elegant centrepiece on a dining table. Discover more at www.klimchi.com and follow @klimchistudio on Instagram. Use code WOI10 for 10% off (expires 31/10/2022). Pictured Underlay Amber Hobnail Jug and Tumblers, £179.
Photo credit: @homeinheidelberg

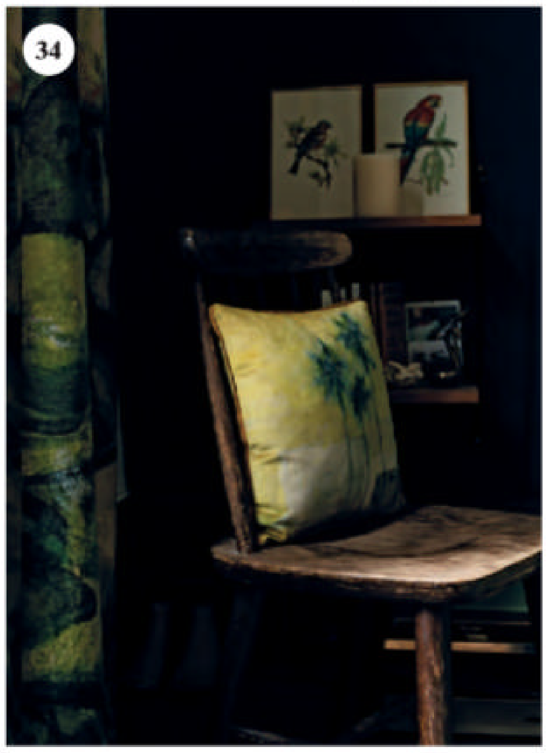


33. Founded in 2020 **UWU STUDIO** is a minority ethnic, woman owned British company. Ran by Illustrator and designer Lily Hammond, an up and coming artist. She turns her detailed artwork into striking homeware with mesmerising colour and patterns. Above are a series of original illustrations by Lily, creating a stunning focal point in her clients home. Available for commissions and lots of originals in store to buy. Follow on Instagram @uwu_studio_ or online www.uwustudio.co.uk



34. ACCENT INTERIOR's collection of reed diffusers challenges the traditional concept of home fragrance. Each diffuser features stems of real, preserved flowers or foliage to create a stunning addition that seamlessly blends into interior décor. With 200ml of luxury fragrance, their diffusers will last up to 10 months.
Visit www.accentinterior.co.uk and follow @accentinterior on Instagram.

35. Born in 2006, **MAISON LÉVY** is a company rooted in the pictural creations of a multicultural family, its collections of textiles and wallpapers brings you on a poetic journey. Discover their exclusive library of prints designed and made in France on www.maisonlevy.fr and follow @maisonlevy on Instagram. Photo credits to Amélie Chassary.



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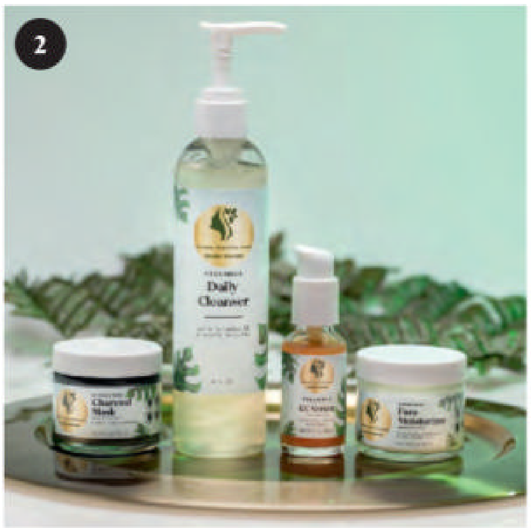
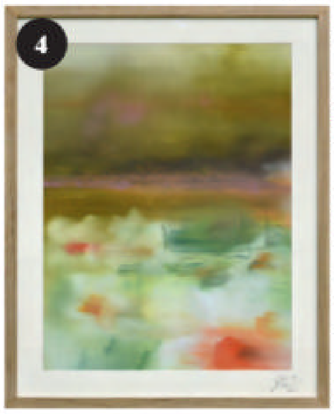
SPRING PICKINGS





1. CARRIER COMPANY is a family run firm making sustainable clothing and equipment in the UK since 1995. Inspired by gardening and foraging on the North Norfolk coastline, Carrier Company works with naturally resilient fabrics on designs for men and women that perform year round and stand the test of time. Visit www.carriercompany.co.uk and follow @carriercompanyuk on Instagram.

2. NATURAL BEAUTIFUL BLISS' vegan Cucumber Cleanser is gentle and reduces the appearance of dirt, impurities, and dry or dead skin cells. It provides a refreshing cleansing routine while maintaining moisture in the skin. The cleanser also helps to reduce the appearance of pores. Find them as naturalbeautifulbliss.com and follow @natural_beautifulbliss on Instagram.

3. ACARRE(TM) Beauty Edit, multi-use bioactive dry oil, uses plant biodiversity to re-balance the microbiome and create a look and feeling of smooth and youthful skin, while ethical sourcing improves livelihoods of communities. The all-natural oil is rich in fatty acids and vitamins that target the microbiome to nourish the scalp and skin and lock in moisture. Visit acarre.co and follow @acarrebeauty on Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Tiktok and Twitter.

4. OLIVIA ROSE DURLEY is a British painter specialising in abstract landscapes, seeking to capture the transience of everyday life. Each painting reflects an enigmatic, placeless experience within nature evoking a sense of familiarity yet holding an unidentifiable discomfort. For regular updates on her practice, follow @oliviarose.artist on Instagram or visit www.oliviarosedurley.com

5. HIKARU PEARL creates handmade accessories with mainly freshwater pearl which is known for its beautiful natural pastel colours, asymmetric shapes and variety of sizes. These elements combined with minimalist design give you a unique, elegant and precious charm. Shop via www.hikarupearl.com and follow @hikarupearl on Instagram.

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create spaces people are drawn to be in, be it to work or to live. Their designs are not just aesthetically pleasing but inviting, comforting, practical and logical. Above all, their spaces are designed to 'work'. Their brand ethos encapsulates what this design firm is about: 'no dream is too big and good design never dates.'

www.gingerandmylo.com
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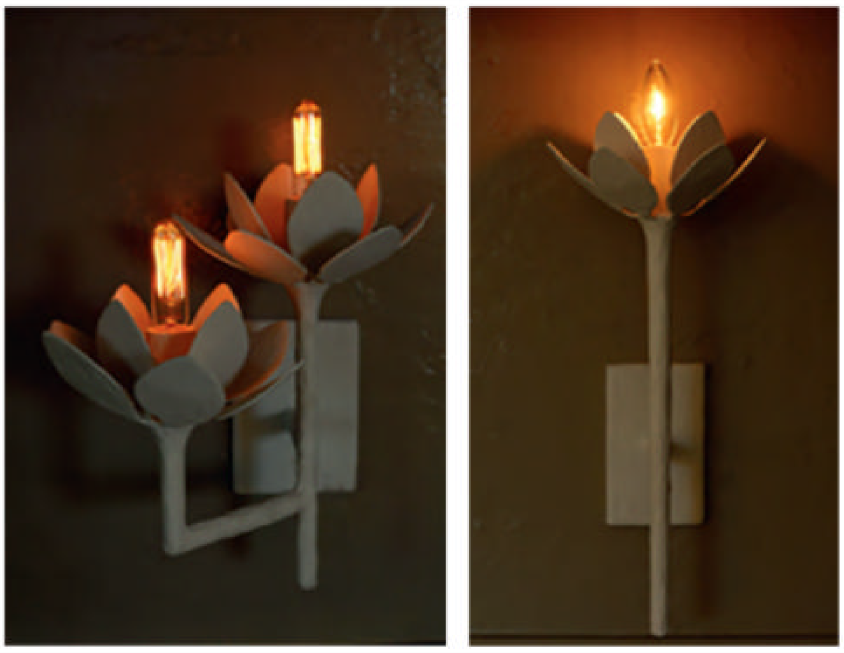

APSARA INTERIOR DESIGN AND APSARA LIGHTING

Established in New York City and East Hampton and now based in Santa Barbara. Tracey Garet's work has been featured in several publications and she is recognised for her Giacometti-inspired chandelier designs. Her background is in art, antiques, and interiors. She is currently focusing on her new line of furniture.

Pictured: Double Lotus and Single Lotus Sconce in White Plaster.

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LuLu Maison Interiors is a Cape Town based boutique interior design studio. Their designers have expertise in interior projects in the UK and South Africa and specialise in high end residential and hospitality interiors. They provide all services from concept to installation and offer attention to detail. They work closely with their clients and focus on their requirements to create beautiful and functional spaces.

www.lulumaisoninteriors.co.za
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VANESSA WATTS

is a Brooklyn based, interior designer whose work has shaped beloved homes, hotels, restaurants and clubs. All of these projects stemmed from a tight and compelling, conceptual story and expanded into beautifully built worlds with mystique and desirability. Vanessa's work touches every aspect of the interior world, from the architecture of the space to the textiles, touch-points and finishes.

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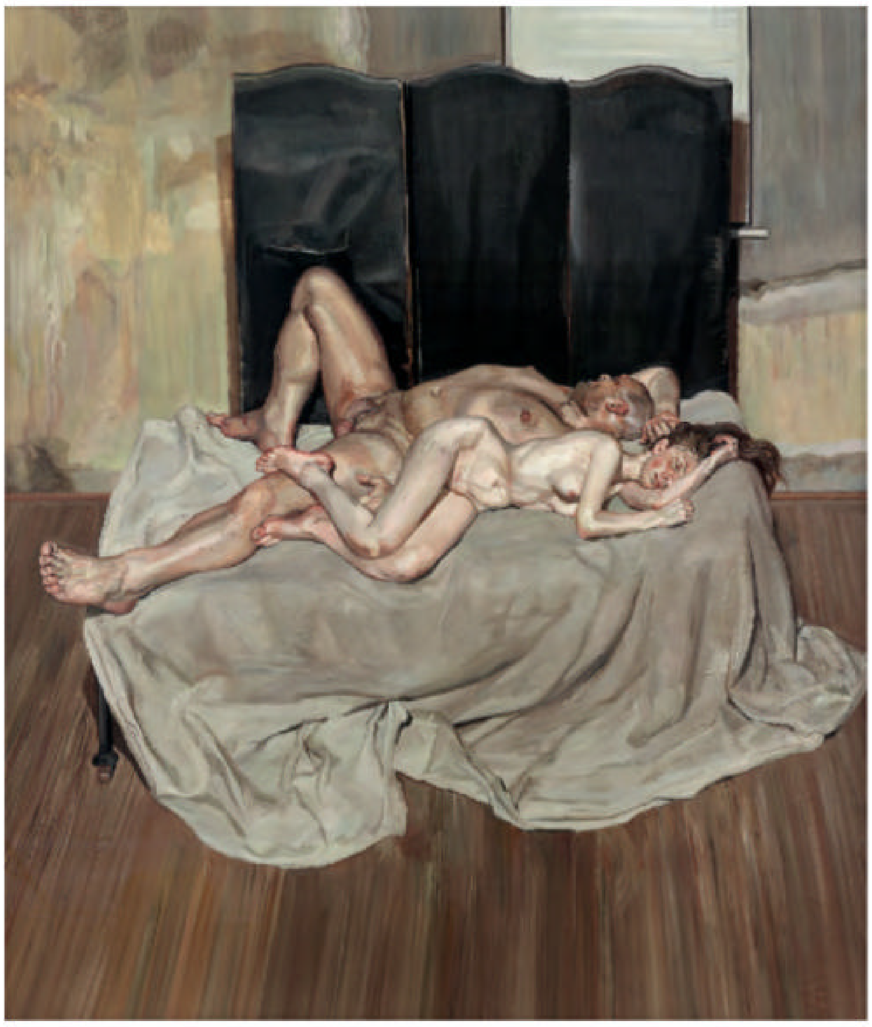
Marriage à la Mode

Lucian Freud's painting of Leigh Bowery and his collaborator encapsulates the boundary-breaking ballsiness of London's late 1980s nightlife. Kim Jones strips it bare



Lucian Freud, 'And the Bridegroom', 1993, oil on canvas, 232 × 196cm. Private collection

COURTESY: THE LEWIS COLLECTION. © THE LUCIAN FREUD ARCHIVE. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED 2022 / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

A black folding screen partially covers a window, its blind closed; set against it is the profile of a naked recumbent man, his right leg bent at the knee, his left leg extending diagonally across a grey sheet draped haphazardly on a castored bed. The thumb of his left hand gently presses into his own thigh. Juxtaposed against his large frame is a petite woman with eyes closed, her body turned towards the viewer in an almost foetal position, apparently at peace. Her feet join his thumb in an affectionate embrace of his upper leg.

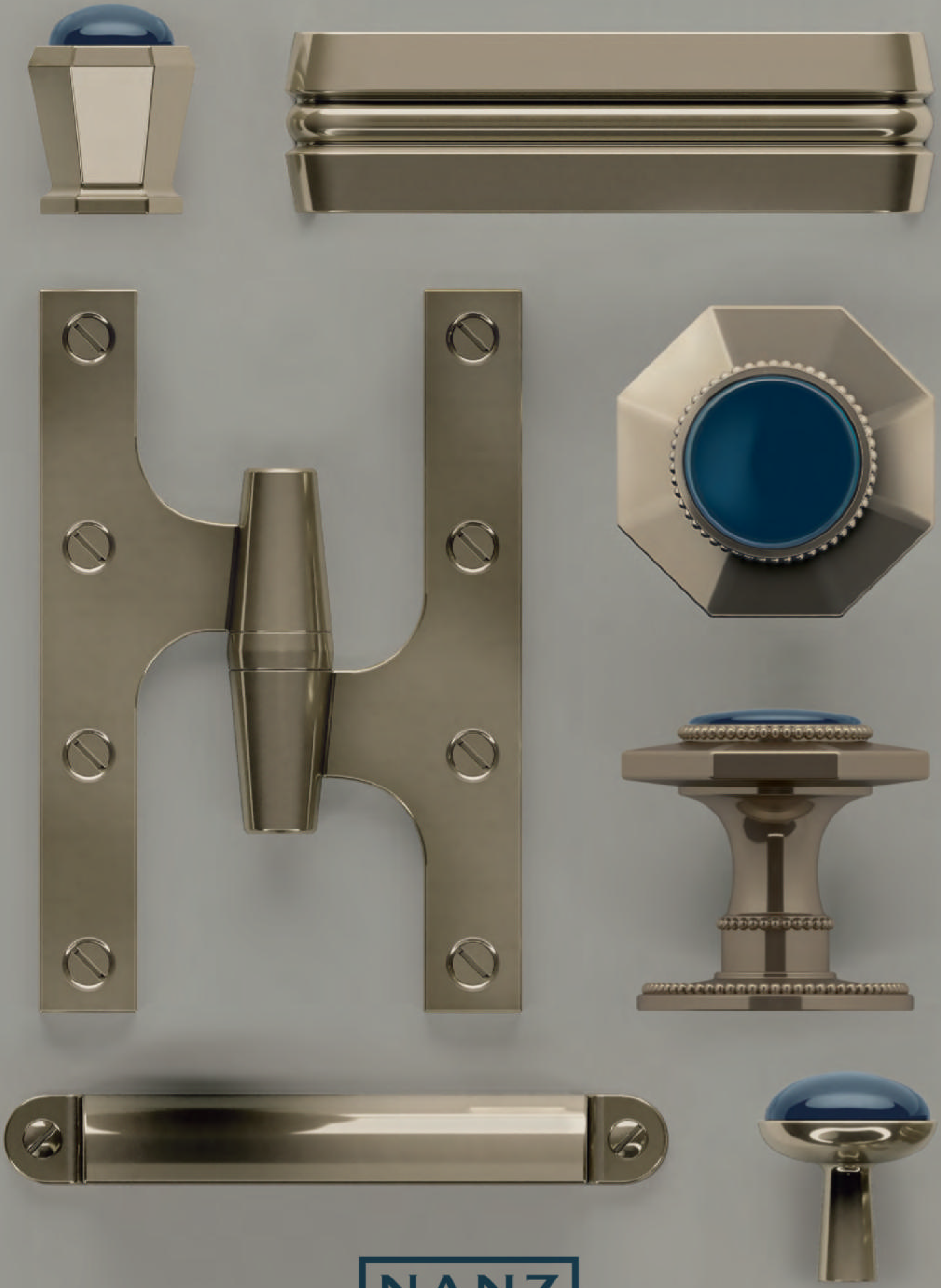
And the Bridegroom, Lucian Freud's 1993 painting of the performance artist Leigh Bowery and his friend and collaborator Nicola Bateman, takes its title from a line in AE Housman's poem 'Epithalamium' and is a pure reflection of the intimacy and unconventionality of his subjects' relationship. Housman, a closeted homosexual, wrote the poem as a belated celebration of the marriage of his close friend, and unrequited love, Moses Jackson – an epithalamium being both a poem written for a bride-to-be and a type of Renaissance nude portrait given to newlyweds to bestow happiness and fertility.

In one of his most notorious performances, Bowery would appear on stage singing and dancing in costume 'pregnant', dropping on to his back to simulate giving birth to a naked young woman, Bateman. Despite being openly gay (he is said to have wanted Freud to title their portrait *A Fag and his Hag*), he married Bateman at an east London register office on Friday 13 May 1994, one year after the portrait was completed. Just seven months later, on new year's eve, Bowery died from an Aids-related illness.

The years when Freud counted the performer as a muse – 1990 to 1994 – were formative for me. I had long been excited by the cross-pollination of fashion, art and music, having avidly consumed magazines such as *i-D* and *The Face*. Pilgrimages to London nightclubs from the south of England were a precursor to my moving to the city proper in 1993, the impact of Bowery's singularity evident as I immersed myself in the apparent fearlessness of the capital's nightlife.

As I grew into my nascent career as a fashion designer, it was largely the attitude and culture peculiar to London clubs of the 1980s and 90s that informed my early collections. I loved both the celebration of individualism and the collective spirit that reigned within the various 'style tribes', where a desire for freedom of expression often surpassed any commercial inclinations. Freud's *And the Bridegroom* is for me indicative of this spirit, being a collaborative portrait (it was Bowery's decision to be naked, and he suggested the poses) of two people who were themselves bound in life and craft. Here the sitter may be bereft of his signature costume but he is no less imposing. Freud monumentalises him, parsing his 1.91m and 108kg totem of flesh into thick multidirectional brushstrokes, echoing the manner in which Leigh would manipulate his body into new characters through taping.

As my own career gathered pace, I found myself in the position to acquire certain items of significance for my archive. More than 30 handmade pieces by Bowery dating back to the early 1980s, often constructed from cheap materials sourced from the numerous fabric outlets in the East End, found a home alongside clothes by Christopher Nemeth and Rachel Auburn as well as full looks by Westwood and McLaren, among others. I sourced pieces of impeccable provenance; many of Leigh's outfits that I was fortunate to count in my collection came directly from his great friend and fellow Freud muse Sue Tilley. It was to her that he uttered an immortal line from his hospital bed: 'Don't tell them I've died. Tell them I've gone to Papua New Guinea' ⊛ *Kim Jones is artistic director of Dior menswear and of Fendi womenswear and couture. 'Lucian Freud: New Perspectives' runs at the Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum, 8 Paseo del Prado, 20814 Madrid (00 34 917 911 370; museothyssen.org), 14 Feb–18 June*



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